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RIO CONFERENCE HEARS 13 SPEAKERS IN GENERAL DEBATE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 8 June -- The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) continued this morning its general debate, hearing 13 speakers.

Statements were made by the Minister for Tourism, Natural Resources and Environment of the United Republic of Tanzania, the Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources of Sweden, the Minister in charge of the State Science and Technology Commission and Chairman of the Environment Protection Commission of the State Council of China, and the Minister of Energy and Mining of Morocco.

Other speakers were the Under-Secretary for the Environment of Uruguay, the Minister of Health and Chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee of Bahrain, the Minister of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism of Namibia, the Secretary of State for Natural Resources and Human Environment of Argentina, and the Minister for Environment and Tourism of Zimbabwe.

Also taking part in the debate were the Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Chairman of the Executive Board and Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), and a representative of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, a non-governmental organization.

The Conference will resume at 3 p.m. today. Twenty-two speakers are scheduled.

Statements in General Debate

ABUBAKAR Y. MGUMIA, Minister for Tourism, Natural Resources and Environment of the United Republic of Tanzania: The remarkable degree of flexibility shown by delegations holds out the promise for the establishment

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of a global partnership for sustainable development. Two important steps -- the Conventions on Climate Change and Biological Diversity -- have already been taken. The final and critical step in the process is agreement on "Agenda 21".

The Conference must make progress on the issues of financial resources and technology transfer. Commitments on these issues must be made in the common interest of mankind. The costs might be high, but not if seen in terms of global environmental security. The rough estimate of $125 billion annually is not high when compared to the $1 trillion currently devoted to military expenditures. Without agreement on these two issues, it will not be possible to retain the confidence of all countries in the process and sustain the atmosphere of global partnership. It is not just the success of Rio that is at stake, but the preservation of life on earth.

Unfortunately, the preparatory process concluded before agreement could be reached on a global convention to combat desertification, which is a global environmental problem that must receive more international attention, including increased financial resources. As for forests, a just world order must respect the right of nations to the rational utilization of their own resources.

OLOF JOHANSSON, Minister for the Environment and Natural Resources of Sweden: The major responsibility for the current global environment rests with the industrialized countries. The eradication of poverty must be the top priority in the transition to sustainable development. To accomplish this, the developing countries must mobilize financial resources and develop a policy framework, supported by financial assistance and other resources from the developed countries.

Present consumption patterns, particularly in the developed world, are not compatible with the transition to sustainable development. The most important contribution to the development process would be the successful conclusion of the Uruguay Round. Sweden strongly supports the Conventions on Biological Diversity and Climate Change and urges all countries to sign them. As to Agenda 21, there should be a sharper and more operational focus regarding energy, including nuclear safety and transport policy.

In peacetime, strict environmental norms must be applied for military activities, including the disposal of hazardous waste. The effort to use military resources and techniques for environmental purposes, including emergency situations, should be actively pursued.

Open, participatory and democratic political systems based on popular consent, accountability and human rights are prerequisites for achieving sustainable development. There is a need to ensure effective and credible institutional arrangements in the United Nations to follow up the results of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

SONG JIAN, State Councilor, Minister in charge of the State Science and Technology Commission and Chairman of the Environment Protection Commission of

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the State Council of China: Past production and consumption patterns cannot continue; environmental protection must be carried out in harmony with economic and social development. Without peace and stability, environmental protection and sustainable development are out of the question.

A global partnership, as contained in the Rio Declaration, should enhance international cooperation in the preservation, protection and restoration of the global ecosystem as well as in economic development; should be based on universally accepted norms of respect for national sovereignty and territorial integrity, mutual non-aggression and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, as well as on equality and peaceful coexistence. It should also be equitable and just; be able to handle such environment-related issues as financial resources and technology; and have the active participation of the entire international community.

China has serious concern over the lack of progress on such key issues as financial resources and technology transfer, both of which constitute an indispensable means for international cooperation. Without progress in these areas, the implementation of Agenda 21 is impossible. China is aware of its responsibility in protecting the global environment, and has made unremitting efforts despite financial, technological and other difficulties. It has also assumed its share of obligations at the international level.

DRISS ALAOUI MDAGHRI, Minister for Energy and Mining of Morocco: The numerous aspects of the environmental question have to be debated in various forums but the cause-and-effect relationship between poverty and environmental degradation has already been established. Another important factor is desertification. The Conference could serve as a catalyst in the effort to analyse and solve the environmental crises. It implies a collective awareness and commitment to seek a shared solution to the challenge. "The alarm heard throughout the world cannot leave us indifferent." There must be a common goal for achieving sustainable development. The Rio meeting is the start of negotiations for the new rules to be established.

Morocco attaches particular importance to institutional structures which must be carefully thought out, particularly for implementing Agenda 21. Existing bodies must be evaluated and there must be a strengthening of international capabilities. Financing the implementation of Agenda 21 requires additional resources to underwrite environmental programmes and to stimulate developmental efforts. Morocco supports the concept of reconverting the debt.

The advancement of ecologically rational technology is indispensable for the management of the environment. The advancement of human resources is extremely important and is a prerequisite for having access to the necessary environmentally rational technology. Active international cooperation is imperative.

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JULIO CESAR BALINO, Under-Secretary for the Environment of Uruguay: The vast environmental problems that face the world could endanger the survival of the human species. This Conference must promote rational, sustainable development that can take place without destroying environmental balance.

While each country takes stock of its environmental problems, it must also be recognized that no State can solve such problems on its own. Solidarity is necessary for survival. Unfortunately, the rapid advances of science have not been accompanied by a rapid advance in thinking. The world faces a crisis of values, from which a new world order must emerge. If this does not happen, a solution to environmental problems will not be found.

To invoke sovereignty as an absolute principle today is a criminal absurdity when what is at stake is the survival of the planet. The idea is to defend life, humankind. Thus, the question of sovereignty must be placed in its proper perspective. Furthermore, the time has passed for simply repeating the principles of Stockholm. Those principles must be translated into binding obligations. A general convention on environmental law must be elaborated. All countries must work to ensure that this Conference will be the beginning of a process that will create legally and politically binding conventions in the defense of life and sustainable development.

JAWAD SALIM AL-ARAYED, Minister of Health and Chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee of Bahrain: Environmental threats must be faced on a global level, since such problems transcend national boundaries. The Earth Summit indicates the beginning of a new world and presents an opportunity, with the Rio Declaration, to lay the foundation for the twenty-first century and ensure the common future.

Agenda 21 aims at limiting the effects of environmental problems that encompass the entire planet. The radical political transformations that have taken place in the world in the past two years only emphasize the importance that multilateral institutions and solutions will take on in coming years. The problems of air and ocean pollution and ozone depletion are at the top of the list of international concerns and are centre stage in Agenda 21. A new principle of development is necessary, one that protects the environment.

The question of sustainable development is one of the major challenges facing the world community. It is no longer tenable to see poor States live under austerity measures that cause explosive situations, while already facing poverty, hunger and homelessness. The world must collectively strive to eliminate backwardness and offer financial support to sustainable development. Environmental problems are of great magnitude and most of the consequences fall on the developing countries, who lack the resources to do anything about them. They need increased financial resources, official development assistance and the transfer of technology. Environmental protection can only be achieved by integrating it into development plans.

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NIKO BESSINGER, Minister of Wildlife Conservation and Tourism of Namibia: Namibia's Constitution clearly demonstrates the country's concern for the environment, and the issues raised at Rio accord with Namibia's legitimate concerns.

Namibia's "Green Plan" elaborates on Namibia's approach to environmental challenges and the management of its natural resources. However, the country's renewable and non-renewable resources have long been subjected to often indiscriminate and destructive exploitation, mainly to the benefit of foreign interests. Among these is the country's fish resources, which have suffered significant reverses.

It is extremely difficult for Namibia effectively to counter the challenges of environmental degradation and to achieve economic development. The joint and coordinated efforts of developing and industrialized countries are required to reduce levels of poverty and its effects on the environment. The transfer of technology to developing countries to ensure environmentally sound production processes must be an essential element in successfully fulfilling the need for environmentally sound development strategies.

While there is a need to conserve tropical forests, the burden of doing so should not be borne by the developing countries alone. The temperate forests of the North must be restored. Soliciting developing countries to provide storage for radioactive waste at lucrative rates of compensation could spell disaster.

NAFIS SADIK, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund: Slower overall population growth in developing countries must be accompanied by restraint in consumption on the part of the industrial countries. Population stabilization emerges naturally from education, health and welfare policies. Development programmes must therefore give priority to social investment in those areas. Such investments encourage healthy economic growth, help defeat poverty and secure sustained and sustainable development.

If energy, land and water are the keys to survival, the keys are held by women. Today's women want smaller families, yet there are 300 million women in developing countries who have no access to modern family-planning services. Equity will be achieved only if those women have the same access to such services as their counterparts in the North. The availability of full information and services, which will enable women and men to make voluntary, free and informed choices in the matter of family size, must be ensured.

The 1994 Conference on Population and Development will have as its overall theme "population, sustained economic growth and sustainable development". Its objectives are to assess the implementation of the World Population Plan of Action and the recommendations of the 1984 Conference on Population; produce recommendations to set priorities for action in the next century; encourage mobilization of resources; and increase the visibility of population issues on the international agenda.

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MARIA JULIA ALSOGARAY, Secretary of State, Natural Resources and Human Environment of Argentina: Argentina now has credible economic stability and, based upon that stability, hopes to avoid growth that destroys the environment. Yet, satisfied as a country might be with its own resources, it is clear that there is often a close relationship with resources elsewhere, as was the case with Argentina and the resources of Amazonia and Antarctica. The responsibility of a country is not limited to itself, but includes the impact it has on its neighbours and the rest of the planet.

Environmental costs must now be included in the planning of productive processes, and subsidies must be ended for certain practices -- particularly in agriculture -- that have serious environmental consequences. Industrial development must take place with clean technology and the business community must be able to see the advantages of using those technologies. At the same time, developed countries must ensure that their own, older environmentally harmful technologies are not exported to developing countries.

Argentina will be carrying out an inventory of environmentally sensitive areas to help environmental planning and preservation, but hopes with that inventory to see these areas not as islands but linked in ecological corridors, allowing sustainable exploitation of native flora and fauna. The world should not concentrate all its energies on certain systems, such as tropical forests, to the detriment of others. Intense work must begin on the adoption of a forest convention, as a complement to the Convention on Biodiversity.

MICHEL CAMDESSUS, Managing Director, International Monetary Fund (IMF): Any growth strategy, to be sustainable, must respect the environment; environmental protection, to be effective, has to be part and parcel of a viable growth strategy. The IMF tries to ensure that countries pursue sound strategies to achieve growth by the advice it gives to its member countries, both on their choice of appropriate economic objectives and on the means to attain them. Its advice to them incorporates environmental concerns in the areas of pricing, fiscal policies and trade.

If countries are to meet their shared global responsibility for sustainable development, including protection of the environment, they need to adjust fundamentally their domestic economic policies, acting soon to mobilize additional financial resources and improve national savings rates. This can be accomplished only through hard decisions -- to raise taxes or to cut unproductive spending. Also needed are structural measures to improve the working of market mechanisms and to improve the efficiency of government.

The central purposes of the Conference are attainable, provided countries accept their global responsibilities with the same sense of urgency and accept the consequences, namely, a commitment to sound economic policies, solidarity in tackling global problems and generosity in helping the poorer countries in coping with their share of what is a universal problem.

HERBERT MURERWA, Minister for Environment and Tourism of Zimbabwe: The shared destiny of the world is not just an ecological problem, it is an

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economic and political reality intrinsically linked to distribution of wealth. This demands a common commitment to restructure existing economic and political relations. Survival cannot be achieved while an economic order condemns 80 per cent of humanity to poverty.

The forests of the developing world, its atmosphere and natural resources are destined for destruction in order to compensate for inadequacies in the functioning of the global economic system. The poor countries are not indifferent to their responsibility towards the environment, but under the present circumstances they are unable to choose the quality of their life; poverty is their destiny. Thus, the transition by the poor to sustainable development must mirror a transition by the entire world to a sustainable way of life, which must include an economic environment that will free the developing world from the shackles of indebtedness, low commodity prices, restricted access to technology and protectionist trade.

Agreement on Agenda 21 and the means of its implementation should be the most important outcome of the Rio Conference. Today, however, it remains trapped in "square brackets" -- lack of agreement -- on the critical questions of financial resources, financial mechanisms and technology transfer. A commitment to provide the means for implementation of this vital programme of action will be the litmus test of the new global partnership. As for the Global Environment Facility, this proposed funding mechanism must take into account the concerns of developing countries, including more equitable representation.

ULYSSES GUIMARAES, Interparlimentary Union: The history of the world should have taught the world that species that are not able to respect nature have disappeared. With that realization, Parliamentarians have drafted a declaration that recognizes a new concept regarding relationship among peoples, that of interdependence. The Rio Conference must set the general objectives, integrating environmental and developmental needs. Those objectives must integrate the rules of the biosphere with the development of the economy. There must be a change in structure and in legislation, in accordance with the will of the people.

Parliamentarians will have a vital role to play to ensure that the Earth Summit will not be a dead letter. It is essential to arrive at Parliamentarian harmonization. To that end, a global Parliamentarian Conference will be held in Brasilia later this year to analyse the decisions taken in Rio and their significance for the populations they represent. They will study the question of follow-up at the parliamentarian level and consider ways and means of evaluating the decisions taken by UNCED. The Earth Summit is the last chance to stem the threat to development, universal security and the survival of humanity.

The Parliamentarians appeal to all Governments to refrain from betraying the expectations of the global community.

SHARON CAPELING-ALAKIJA, Director of the United Nations Development Fund for Women: Women close to the negotiations that led to Rio have become

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apprehensive about the financial and institutional arrangements that will follow UNCED. Did the call to forge new partnerships include women or would women once again be marginalized? If the Conference fails to forge new partnerships between men and women, would not its vision for saving the planet simply be a mirage?

The planet is humanity's common home and requires good management, but who are the managers? At the grassroots level in most countries women have the primary responsibility for the management of the natural resource base. Without the contribution of women, national economies would collapse in many developing countries. At a policy level, women have also made a significant contribution to the environmental movement as scientists, technicians, journalists and advocates for change.

Thus, women have been central to the international effort to inscribe environment and development on the global agenda. Yet, women are conspicuously absent from decision-making processes at all levels. This is inefficient, unjust and unsupportable. Women must participate equally in shaping the institutions that ultimately will shape everyone. For effective sustainable development, the mainstream must become a bigger stream, encompassing North and South, rich and poor, and men and women.

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FAO STUDY ESTIMATES TROPICAL DEFORESTATION AT 16.9 MILLION HECTARES A YEAR

Director-General of Agency Stresses Need For Better Conservation Management and Sustainable Use of Forest Resources

RIO DE JANEIRO, 9 June (FAO) -- Deforestation of tropical forests stands at 16.9 million hectares a year, with the situation particularly serious in the humid zones of Central and South America, continental southeast Asia and West Africa, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) announced today at the Earth Summit.

The current deforestation rate shows a 50 per cent jump from that in 1980 when it was reported at 11.3 million, FAO said.

"Our latest figures confirm the alarming trend of recent years and point to the need for better conservation management and sustainable use of forest resources", FAO's Assistant Director-General, C. Hollis Murray commented.

According to the Rome-based specialized United Nations agency, about 70 per cent of total deforestation takes place in tropical rainforests and moist forest zones. As for the dry zones, deforestation and woodland degradation remain acute in the Sudano-Sahelian zone of Africa.

The FAO announced its figures after a study based not only on geographical areas but also on ecological zones.

The analysis found that deforestation in the humid lowlands was highest in Latin America and the Caribbean while in Africa deforestation affected, to a large extent, the dry tropical zones.

In addition to deforestation, caused mainly by agricultural development, millions of hectares are degraded as a result of timber logging in some humid tropical areas or over-exploitation for fuelwood and grazing in the dry tropics.

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As for forest plantations, the net area planted in the 1980s was 2.6 million hectares a year. While deforestation outpaced plantations, FAO noted, the ratio of net planted area to deforested area increased, from 1 to 10, to 1 to 6.5.

The FAO placed the total area of tropical forests at 4.9 billion hectares, with 266 million hectares of protected forest areas.

Fifty per cent of the land area of tropical Latin America is covered by forests, mainly tropical rainforests. In Asia, the area covered by tropical forests is 33 per cent of the entire land and in Africa, it is 27 per cent.

The new figures emerging from the tropical forestry part of FAO's comprehensive global forestry resources in industrialized countries was being conducted with the cooperation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

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UN CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT ADDRESSED

BY 21 SPEAKERS AS GENERAL DEBATE CONTINUES

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 8 June -- Debate continued this afternoon at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), with 21 speakers setting out their positions on environment and development issues.

This afternoon's speakers were the Vice-President and Head of the National Environmental Protection Organization of Iran; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ecuador; the Minister for Environment of Greece; the Minister for Ecology and Natural Resources of the Russian Federation; the Minister for Environment of Turkey; the Minister for Nature and Environmental Protection of Mongolia; the Minister for Rural Development and Environment of Guinea-Bissau; and the Minister for Agriculture of Chad.

Also making statements were the Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment of Malta; the Minister for Environment and Forests of Cameroon; the Minister of State for Environment of Syria; the Minister for Environment of Benin; the National Secretary for Environment of Bolivia; the Minister for Environment of Estonia; the Special Presidential Adviser on Foreign Affairs of Guyana; and the representatives of Sierra Leone and Vanuatu.

Other speakers included the Deputy Secretary-General of the Latin American Economic System (SELA); and the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Representatives of two non-governmental organizations, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the Global Legislators' Organization for a Balanced Environment, also made statements.

Statements in General Debate

ACHILLES KARAMANLIS, Minister for Environment of Greece: Greek people, with a coastline of 16,000 kilometres and over 3,500 islands, are becoming more aware of their environmental responsibilities and of the challenge of environmentally sound sustainable development. Greece has granted constitutional protection to the environment and has established a special

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court for that purpose. It follows the environmental policies of the European Economic Community and will spare no effort to implement the policies that will be approved at UNCED.

Greece endorses the Rio Declaration as a useful basis for the development of international legislation. The Convention on Climate Change is a significant first step and the Biodiversity Convention creates an initial framework for fair and equitable sharing of scientific results and other benefits arising from the use of genetic resources. Greece welcomes the declaration on forests as a solid starting point to negotiate a future convention. It also welcomes the initiative for a similar declaration regarding desertification.

The Greek Government hopes that "Agenda 21" will reflect the common strong political commitment to meet the needs related to both the protection of the environment and the achievement of sustainable development. For the implementation of such a dynamic programme, the international community relies on the United Nations system as well as on major groups in society. While elaborating the relevant texts, one should take into account the difficulties which may arise for some countries during the implementation stage.

V.I. DANILOV-DANILIAN, Minister for Ecology and Natural Resources of the Russian Federation: The Rio Conference is absolutely essential for a transition to a more balanced treatment of economic growth and the ecological health of the planet. Despite the fact that two major agreements of the Conference -- the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity -- are not as strong as many want, they are milestones in preserving the environment. Russia's land mass makes up one sixth of the world, thus making it critical for the earth environment as a whole. Yet, the environmental situation is alarming because of the dangers posed by the unreliability of Russia's nuclear energy facilities and the improper storage of nuclear waste.

This critical situation has been brought about as the result of distorted economic development. In the past, the militarization of the economy had led to the overdevelopment of heavy industry and environmental factors were for the most part ignored. Now, the Russian economy is outmoded physically. As Russia has begun the process of restructuring the economy, it needs a rise in production and the question is: will such growth be compatible with the environment?

Unfortunately, there is now a tremendous lack of investment resources and it is naive to hope that the financial resources needed for ecological improvement are somehow at hand. Most of these resources will have to be created by Russia itself. One of Russia's major resources is timber. Yet, besides their pure economic value, Russia's forests are becoming an important consideration in slowing global warming. Partial deforesting of Russia could drastically alter the climate.

B. DOGANCAN AKYUREK, Minister for the Environment of Turkey: Concentrating efforts on individual problems will not lead to the desired success. Those efforts must be concurrently aimed at environmental protection and economic and social development, and targeted at the elimination of

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existing imbalances world-wide. Turkey expects UNCED to answer the question of what the developed and developing countries must do to achieve sustainable development.

A realistic strategy must be formulated aimed at generating sufficient resources. While there is common responsibility for implementing the strategy, the degrees differ. Efforts must be pooled in the solution of local, regional and global environmental problems. The cornerstones of Turkey's environmental policy are prevention of environmental problems before they emerge, and the application of the "polluter pays" principle.

Turkey has become a party to the basic international conventions on the environment, most recently signing a Convention in Bucharest with coastal Black Sea countries. All references to the Convention on the Law of the Sea in Agenda 21 in no way prejudice Turkey's rights and position with regards to maritime areas. While Turkey will sign the Biodiversity Convention, it believes that certain criteria in the Climate Change Convention need to be determined regarding the level of development and emissions from countries. Population, surface area, wetlands and forests should be considered as the main parameters.

DIEGO CORDOVEZ, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ecuador: Ecuador intends to sign the two Conventions before the Conference. The environment is used by many simply to survive and conditions have not allowed those great numbers of human beings to live in decent conditions. The imperative to satisfy the urgent needs of human beings commit all to care for and guard the planet. That commitment must be on the national as well as the international levels.

In Ecuador, which proportionate to its size has the greatest biological diversity in the world, non-governmental organizations have participated in and contributed to an enriching dialogue. The country has committed itself to structuring its growth in order to make possible the successful coexistence of man and nature. Unfortunately, the country's efforts to improve the situation have not been recognized. What is needed is not criticism but support to help the country improve its efforts.

Ecuador is working to restore its forest sector, which was seriously threatened. Rural poverty has made necessary an over-exploitation of that resource resulting in the worst erosion the country has ever experienced. It is urgent to create industry to generate sources of employment without polluting technologies.

The eight countries of the Amazon region work together to promote policies and strategies to protect the Amazon basin, which occupies 7.3 million square kilometres with the greatest river on earth and a huge proportion of the earth's tropical forests.

ZAMBYN BATJARGAL, Minister of Nature and Environmental Protection of Mongolia: While Mongolia is endowed with clean air, crystal clear rivers and virgin lands, the living standards of the people remain very low. One reason

is ecological, namely, the harsh natural and climatic conditions in the country. Nature there is extremely vulnerable and sensitive to any forms of economic activities.

Mongolia is undergoing a difficult period of transition to a market-oriented economy. That gives it a rare opportunity to choose a most optimal strategy of sustained development and to abandon the former system that led to the wasteful and lopsided exploitation of natural resources and the destruction of ecological equilibria. Mongolia can make its contribution in protecting biological diversity and the genetic fund. The country's flora and fauna are less exposed to the artificial ecological system and could serve as a good example of the existence and evolution of various natural ecosystems in extreme conditions. Thus, all of Mongolia could be considered a biosphere reserve of the world.

For all nations, especially the developing countries, to address squarely the global environmental imperatives, the availability of financial resources as well as "clean" technologies is crucial. A greater responsibility for rectifying the onerous economic and environmental situations lies with the developed nations. But it is not simply a matter of assistance or aid, but of global partnership in working together towards a true goal of development and environmentally sound and sustainable quality of life.

MARIO CABRAL, Minister for Rural Development and Environment of Guinea-Bissau: The success of the Rio Conference must be looked at from the standpoint of the direct and interdependent relationship of the environment with sustainable development. For developing countries, Rio is a milestone of hope and expectations, a demonstration of what can happen when dialogue is used to find common solutions.

The last world Conference, held in Stockholm in 1972, had made an appeal for environmental awareness. To build upon that awareness, today in Rio, the issue of sustainable development must not simply be discussed, but the proper solutions found to prevent the destruction of the environment. Particular issues, such as the Climate Change and Biodiversity Conventions, should be approached with consensus, because of their importance and their future implications. All countries must support the common African position on the issue of desertification, which is a matter of survival for many African countries and could mean the extinction of thousands of animal and plant species. The international community must emphasize the dramatic situation of drought in African countries.

The world must not be disappointed, particularly the young. The material and financial resources are there to overcome the challenges. What is needed is will and solidarity. There is only one world. The effort to save it must be a joint one.

BAMBE DANSALA, Minister for Agriculture of Chad: For the first time humankind is confronting an ecological danger as terrible as nuclear weapons. There is a need not only to integrate environment and development, but also to

undertake measures to deal with environmental degradation. Chad, situated in the desert and totally landlocked, has seen its efforts ruined by years of civil war.

As with other developing countries, Chad is dependent on its natural resources of water, soil and subsoil, flora and fauna. That dependence has affected the ecological balance and led to desertification. To that can be added such problems as soil erosion, demographic pressure and deforestation in the rural sector and, in the urban centres, insufficient equipment to ensure basic sanitary conditions. The country's richness and diversity have been followed by drought, brush fires and poaching. Nevertheless, the Government has not forsaken its responsibilities and has taken institutional, legal and administrative measures.

In dealing with the problems of environment and development, also to be tackled are those of poverty and famine, the lack of education, hospitals, housing and employment, as well as explosive population growth. Yet, the form of development to which most countries aspire will lead to calamity. It is essential to learn the lessons of history. Mankind today has the capacity and the power to act with regard to natural phenomena. The technical and scientific means available are immense.

NOEL SINCLAIR, Deputy Secretary-General of the Latin American Economic System (SELA): The responsibility, particularly towards future generations, is onerous, nothing less than laying the basis for a new relationship between man and nature and a new relationship between developed and developing countries. The development of developing countries cannot be put on hold while the environment is saved; States must receive compensation for resources that are valuable to maintaining a healthy environment.

Whatever the outcome, UNCED is a success. The fact that developed and developing countries are talking about sustainable development and about the costs of implementing sustainable development policies is already a considerable success. If all the principles considered important by certain countries are not put into practice, there is no reason for cynicism and doom. After all, when countries begin to discuss how to deal with marine pollution or grinding poverty, problems that did not respect political frontiers, is that not already in the realm of a new concept of international security? The rich industrial North cannot remain secure while the South remains in poverty. That interdependence is being recognized and that reality is what should prompt faith in the UNCED process.

Rio is but the end of the beginning of a process. The conclusions of UNCED will give new meaning to the ethic of international cooperation. In the post-Rio era, joint regional actions should be identified that could advance sustainable development, strengthening national capacities, as well as solving environmental problems of regional significance.

CEDRIC H. GRANT, Special Presidential Adviser on Foreign Affairs of Guyana: This Conference is crucial to avert impending ecological catastrophe and to set the world firmly on the path of sustainable development. A process of institutional change must take place to integrate environment and

development, but there must also be a greater appreciation of the many debilitating problems with which the developing countries are struggling. Urgent action must be taken to improve terms of trade, relieve the burden of foreign debt, provide greater access to markets and make technology and financial resources available to developing countries.

The issue is not just one of financial resources. What good will those resources serve if the mechanisms for disbursement present new conditions? A mechanism without conditions is necessary, one that is transparent, democratic and embraces the integration of environment and development. Such considerations must influence the reform of the Global Environment Facility.

Because of its rich natural forest cover -- up to 75 per cent of Guyana is covered with forests -- the Biodiversity Convention is of crucial importance, even though it does not meet all of Guyana's expectations. Guyana's forests are a rich reservoir of biodiversity and also have multiple resources that could be developed. Guyana's strong commitment to sustainable utilization of these forest resources are in keeping with the decision taken three years ago to set aside 1 million acres of forest land for a pilot project in sustainable utilization.

JAMES P.GRANT, Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF): The UNICEF issues a special appeal to the Conference on behalf of the world's children to address the older face of the environmental crisis -- malnutrition and disease, early death and lifelong disability, paucity of choices, discrimination against women and children and structural violence, all consequences of poverty and underdevelopment -- with as much seriousness of purpose and with as great a sense of urgency as it grapples with the newer environmental problems that the world has created.

The sharp reductions in population that will have to take place in the developing world will require a massive assault on poverty's worst consequences, a major improvement in health care, education and the status of women -- a revolution in social values and reproductive behaviour. While the industrialized countries struggle to cope with environmental problems caused by over-consumption, 14 million children will die this year. "This is a moral obscenity, a blemish unworthy of civilization."

The follow-up programme to the Earth Summit should incorporate the list of "do-ables" embraced at the 1990 Summit for Children. Agenda 21 contains the basic education and health goals. The final document should recognize children and youth as protagonists of the participatory process for development and environmental improvement. The UNICEF also supports primary or "preventative" environmental care, the idea being to empower communities to take preventative or remedial action at the vital points of interaction between people and their immediate environment.

STANLEY ZAMMIT, Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment of Malta: The Conference should be seen as a signal for a convergence of ideas to safeguard the well-being of the planet and the prosperity of the people on it.

Malta was first to have launched a number of issues being debated at the Conference, including the concept of a common heritage of mankind as applied to the seabed, the initiative to characterize climate change as a common concern of mankind, and the proposal on the role of the oceans in climate change. At the Rio Conference, Malta has taken a further step and proposed the appointment of a "guardian" who would make proposals on behalf of future generations and, thus, force present generations to think about how their activities might affect future generations. Malta has also proposed that the Trusteeship Council could, in view of its reduced role, hold "in trust for humanity" the environment, the global commons, the resources of the seabed and the rights of future generations.

At the regional level, Malta, along with other Mediterranean States, is implementing the Mediterranean Action Plan, a blueprint for protection of the marine environment and social-economic issues. Malta is also making every effort at the national level to conserve its natural habitat. Because of its small size, Malta is trying to address the question of how it can meet its people's developmental needs and still protect the needs of the environment.

HADI MANAFI, Vice-President and Head of the Department for Protection of Environment of Iran: Environmental problems of developing countries emanate mainly from their insufficient development. To enable them to contribute effectively to the promotion of environmental protection, transfer of technology, on preferential and concessional terms, and provision of additional and new financial resources are needed. The introduction of environmental concerns into economic programmes is essential.

States have the responsibility to ensure that activities within their jurisdiction do not cause damage to the environment of areas beyond their jurisdiction. However, the sovereign right of States to utilize their resources, in accordance with their own national policies and priorities, should not be undermined.

Regrettable situations which require international attention include wars, the use of weapons of mass destruction, the devastation of vital ecosystems, and the plight of war refugees and people under occupation, especially the Palestinians.

A critical environmental predicament persists in the Persian Gulf region, which hosts a wide spectrum of rare species and natural beauty. The Persian Gulf conflict has brought about disastrous environmental consequences to the region. The United Nations General Assembly has acknowledged that the extent of environmental consequences of the Persian Gulf conflict are of such a magnitude that meeting the rehabilitation needs goes beyond the capabilities of the countries of the region.

BEVA DJINGOER, Minister for Environment and Forests of Cameroon: The mobilization of the international community around the environment is not new, as demonstrated by Stockholm, but Rio does come in time to remind the

international community of the ecological threats and tragedies they now face. The theme of the Conference is a challenge to the international community and it must now show solidarity or perish.

Cameroon contains a large amount of tropical forests, rich in biological diversity, and is already dedicated to preserving this resource. More than 60 per cent of Cameroon's forests, which cover 50 per cent of the territory, have been inventoried. There are, however, obstacles to preserving this environment, among them, the external debt, which exerts pressure on natural resources; the deterioration in terms of trade -- particularly in commodities; a demographic explosion, with a rate of growth of 3 per cent and significant urbanization; and drought and desertification. Such obstacles are far from being unique to Cameroon and if the environment is to be preserved, poverty must first be tackled to reduce the pressure on resources and to create a better balance between population, resources and the environment.

Rio must provide a new sense of solidarity, which should result in improved international trade, financial resources, an agreement to review the market for forest resources and specific means to combat desertification. The environmental responsibility is a collective one and should be reflected in a commitment to programmes that will be implemented and financed without preconditions.

ABDUL HAMID AL MOUNAJED, Minister of State for Environment of Syria: Syria has established legislation regarding water, forests, air and soil protection against pollution and the efficient use of natural resources for sustainable development. Its projects include waste treatment plants, combating desertification and drought, and the conservation of the green cover. It has established many reserves to conserve biological diversity and constructed dams to use water efficiently.

Effective practices must be developed to achieve justice in water resources allocation between neighbouring countries. Syria cooperates with all the Arab and world organizations concerning environmental issues. It has joined conventions to protect the Mediterranean from pollution and is working on implementing their decisions and recommendations.

Syria calls attention to the environmental destruction resulting from Israeli practices in the occupied Arab territories -- forest destruction, diversion of river courses and the resulting destruction of the ecosystem. Israel has destroyed the environment in the Golan Heights and southern Lebanon without taking into account human, environmental and historical considerations. That destruction has led to the suspension of development plans in all the occupied territories. Syria hopes the international community will support its right to its lands and that peace will prevail in the holy lands and all over the world.

EUSTACHE SARRE, Minister for Environment of Benin: The numerous economic needs of the African people are made worse by traditional agricultural techniques that accelerate desertification; the setting of ground fires; overgrazing; the use of firewood as the traditional source of energy,

resulting in deforestation; and the absence of potable water in the rural zones. In addition, Africa has to import food to feed its people because of adverse environmental conditions caused by drought and desertification.

The African peoples have defined their priorities in terms of nutritional security, energy security, sustainable economic growth, gainful employment and quality of life. If Africa is to succeed in achieving those priorities, its partners in the North have to realize the economic, social and political dimensions of the need for the international community to engage in negotiating the subject without delay.

A rapid entry into force of the Conventions on Biodiversity and on Climate Change will be of tremendous benefit to all. Benin, in facing its own environmental concerns, has set up adequate measures to control flooding, coast erosion, deforestation and desertification. Transfer of technology remains one of Africa's priorities. Institutional matters deserve particular attention in regard to implementing Agenda 21. It is important to ensure optimal conditions to enable Agenda 21 to succeed. Benin appeals to all countries, particularly those from the North, to ensure that the Rio Summit is not just another summit and that they produce concrete actions.

GERARDO AQUIRRE ULLOA, National Secretary for Environment of Bolivia: Bolivia, with a strong indigenous strain, is developing ways to protect its natural and cultural heritage and taking specific actions to improve its standard of living and reduce poverty -- to develop, while protecting the environment.

A transition has taken place. Bolivia has set up a national fund for the environment and, through such means, has also been able to reduce part of its bilateral debt, transferring it to environmental activities. A process of environmental planning has started and a series of protected areas has been set aside. In terms of indigenous people, their ownership of more than 2 million hectares has now been enshrined in legislation.

Bolivia has scarce economic resources. It has a population of only 7 million, with 50 per cent located in urban areas. It is undertaking sustainable development with the hope that the environment can be preserved. However, the shortage of economic resources calls for the setting of priorities, the first of which is that of reducing poverty. The international community is now convinced that a new order is necessary and there are signs in international relations that a new order is possible and the goal of sustainable development can be achieved. Yet, there is a long road ahead for sustainable development models. Bolivia is committed to undertaking its responsibilities in the new order, to insure its children live in a world that is fairer for all the life forms that inhabit it.

TONIS KAASIK, Minister of the Environment of Estonia, speaking also on behalf of Latvia and Lithuania: Fifty years of foreign occupation have resulted in mismanagement of the economies of these countries and in

environmental neglect and deterioration. Now that national rule has been re-established, each Baltic country welcomes the challenge of again becoming responsible for its own environmental and developmental future.

The most immediate environmental and developmental problem is the impact of a foreign military presence on their territories. Responsible and sustainable development has been hindered because of the diversion of resources from the private sector to sustaining this military presence.

Only with the complete withdrawal of foreign troops from the Baltic States can a substantive environmental clean-up begin. As countries reduce the size of their military budgets, they will need to address their environmental and development effects. The Baltic States look forward to learning from and sharing experience with those countries.

A partnership in technology-sharing does not mean the Baltic States are interested in working only with developed countries. Their goal is to work in partnership with developed and developing countries and with other countries undergoing transition to a market economy. Those States have not come to UNCED to ask for indiscriminate provision of resources, but to find globally responsible solutions for their environmental problems. After years of watching their environment deteriorate, they are anxious to further environmentally sustainable growth.

REG GREEN, International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU): It is vital to involve workers and trade unions in the process of adjustment to the patterns of production and consumption. A series of recent industrial disasters have demonstrated that pollution respects no boundaries. Moreover, the global toll of death and injury related to work activities has been estimated to be equivalent to one Bhopal every day of the year. Insidious and avoidable pollution inefficiency occurs on an enormous scale every day in industry. There is also a serious problem involving the transfer of inappropriate technologies.

Trade unions have a major objective -- the health and safety of workers at their place of work. Workers' concern about the relationship between their work and the broader environment is being translated into demands on employers and Governments to take up the challenge for a more sustainable and secure future.

Many workers are still being killed or tortured for their trade union activities, including activities to protect the environment. The ICFTU will continue to insist on the rightful place of workers and their trade unions in planning and implementation of the policies and programmes aimed at achieving sustainable development. It also has a strong interest in the proposal to create a United Nations commission on sustainable development and would expect full representation on any such body.

ANDREW G. BANGALI (Sierra Leone): If successfully implemented, Agenda 21 will bring about profound social and economic changes. With change comes the expectation of an improvement in the status quo ante of whatever situation

people find themselves. Thus, the establishment of a just and equitable new international order, based on equality and mutual benefit, should be accorded priority.

Discussions on the environment should take place within the context of development, because human beings, and not the environment, are the central concern of sustainable development. The focus of UNCED should not only be on environmental degradation resulting from individual and/or commercial over-exploitation, it must also focus on, and put into proper perspective, deforestation, massive soil erosion, desertification, global warming, biodiversity, and the dumping of hazardous chemical and toxic wastes on innocent and unsuspecting populations.

The issue is one of balance of commitments. There cannot be a safe planet that leaves a part of its inhabitants imperiled by poverty and deprivation. There also cannot be sustainable development without the resources and technology to ensure sustainability. The funds for the implementation of Agenda 21 have to come from the developed world, with incremental costs to be borne by developing countries, as well as additional funds to achieve development. Sierra Leone expects UNCED to lead to a global partnership between developed and developing countries, or at least an alliance on issues of concern to all.

ROBERT F. VAN LIEROP (Vanuatu): The relationship between mankind and the environment in Vanuatu can be characterized as one of mutual respect, harmony and reverence. The environment is a source of economic sustenance, spiritual guidance and cultural identity. It is incomprehensible to think of ever viewing it, or nature, as something to be harnessed and ruthlessly plundered, purely for the large-scale commercial aggrandizement of a few who have alienated themselves from nature and who mistakenly believe they should dominate, rather than respect and peacefully coexist with, other human beings and other forms of life.

Nevertheless, not even the innocent clear, blue skies and deep blue waters of the Pacific are immune from the adverse consequences of the environmental degradation which is a by-product of the industrialization of other regions. Like other developing countries, Vanuatu has been compelled to assume a significant portion of the hidden costs of the conspicuous consumption of people in other regions whose standard of living, although not necessarily their quality of life, is considerably higher.

Despite the imperfections in some of the texts before UNCED, Vanuatu is willing to accept them, and appeals to others not to reopen matters already successfully negotiated. The world has enough declarations of good intentions with respect to the environment and development. What it desperately needs are mechanisms to verify and ensure compliance with the various commitments undertaken in treaties.

ALBERT GORE, United States Senator, speaking on behalf of the Global Legislators' Organization for a Balanced Environment: The Earth Summit is a first step that will ultimately lead to the general recognition that the task

of saving the environment is the central organizing principle in the post-cold war world. The Summit is already a success because every nation in the world is thinking about the same challenge at the same time in a new way.

President Bush speaks for the United States Government, but the American people want the Earth Summit to succeed and they want to contribute to that success. The Earth Summit is a beginning, not an end. Those who serve in congresses or parliaments wish to challenge the Heads of State who will soon arrive. The journey from Rio should begin with a commitment to start negotiations now on a protocol to the Climate Change Convention that will add the targets and time-tables for industrial countries that are necessary to make it work. On the road from Rio, the United States must move towards greater energy efficiency, towards greater use of renewable energy sources, towards real preservation and protection of forests, and towards a meaningful effort not only to clean up pollution, but to stop the pollution at its source.

Anyone who says that the difficulties encountered at the Earth Summit result from the policies of one country is not telling the truth. Governments can only do so much; it is up to the people of every country to recognize their connection to the earth and the responsibility that comes with it.

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United Nations

Press Release

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CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT CONTINUES GENERAL DEBATE

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 9 June -- Ministers of eight countries, and representatives of United Nations, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations this morning addressed the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), as it continued its general debate.

Taking part were the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar; the Minister for Environment and Quality of Life of Mauritius; the Minister for Rural Development and Environment of Mauritania; and the Ministers for Environment of Hungary and Denmark.

The Conference also heard statements by the Minister for Environment of the Republic of Montenegro, Yugoslavia; the Minister and member of the Government of Slovenia; and the Minister for Environment, Construction and Urban Planning of Côte d'Ivoire.

Also addressing the Conference were the President of the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD); the Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP); the Director-General of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries' Fund for International Development; a representative of the Women's Environment and Development Organization; the Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women; and the Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

Statements in General Debate

AHMUD SWALEY KASENALLY, Minister for Environment and Quality of Life of Mauritius: Lying on one of the major oil routes, Mauritius is vulnerable to marine pollution caused by accidental discharges of oil or by release of ballast at sea. These not only find their way to Mauritius' shores, but cause serious damage to the marine flora and fauna. Agreement should be reached at Rio on strict measures to control the discharge of wastes at sea and contain the dangers of accidental discharge of oil and other hazardous wastes.

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For information media—not an official record

It is unrealistic to expect developing countries to play their role effectively in implementing "Agenda 21" and achieve sustainable development without substantial external financial assistance. New and additional funding should be the basis of the partnership emerging from the Summit. A separate funding mechanism should be established for the implementation of Agenda 21, one which has a democratic and transparent system of governance, is accessible to all developing countries and which provides timely funding for activities according to their priorities and needs.

Sustainable development implies a new concept of economic growth, one that provides fairness and opportunity for all the world's people, not just a privileged few, without further destroying the world's finite natural resources and carrying capacity.

IDRISS JAZAIRY, President, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD): The IFAD is mandated to promote cost-effective ways of alleviating rural poverty. The rural poor, especially women, present a latent resource for environmentally sound development. The Fund is intensifying its efforts to reach its target group of small farmers, artisanal fishermen, nomadic pastoralists, indigenous people and poor rural women. An increasing number of IFAD projects are located in marginal, ecologically fragile areas where the poor, especially women, are locked into patterns of resource degradation.

In unlocking the potential of the rural poor, IFAD has been involving them in their own development on their own terms and has proven that no people are so poor, so isolated or so marginalized as to be beyond the reach of the economic development process. In a situation of budgetary constraint, hard choices will have to be made. In making those choices, it should be clear that rural poverty alleviation must provide the central thrust.

The IFAD's record justifies a strong role for the Fund in channelling incremental resources for sustainable development. An opportunity to capitalize on IFAD's comparative advantage will lie in supporting its Fourth Replenishment, now under negotiation, and in pledging contributions to the second phase of the Fund's special Programme for Africa which is specifically devoted to addressing drought and desertification. With land degradation and poverty being recognized as global problems, IFAD, with successful experience in North-South partnership and burden sharing, looks forward to playing a role in implementing Agenda 21.

MAHFOUD OULD DEDDACH, Minister for Rural Development and Environment of Mauritania: Everywhere, the deterioration of the environment is so dramatic and real that all realize that they are in the same boat. The survival of present and future generations rests on meeting the environmental challenge. New approaches must be found to better utilize the resources of the environment and to sustain human development.

Mauritania belongs both to the Sahara and Sahel region, exposed to the climatic vagaries of nature. For the past two decades, it has experienced relentless desertification and drought, accompanied by an invasion of

locusts. All these problems have led to ecological, energy, food, agriculture and infrastructural crises. Aware of the scope of the desertification and the negative repercussions on the country's development and very survival, the Government has prepared a programme to combat desertification. Mauritania calls on its partners to provide financial and technical assistance to implement that programme to help its affected population. It also calls for a convention against desertification.

The Conference must go beyond selfish interests and reach agreement on principles and rules to govern economic and ecological behaviour for the world's peoples. That can be done by adopting or signing the various documents before it; by allocating additional resources to developing countries and transferring to them the necessary technology to integrate ecological aspects into their development plans; and by creating a global fund which takes account of all environmental problems, including desertification.

U OHN GYAW, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Myanmar: The international community has a unique opportunity in Rio to forge a global partnership to reverse the effects of global environmental degradation. The partnership, however, to be lasting and effective, must be based on equality, respect for sovereignty and shared responsibility. It is only logical that those countries that have been the primary source of environmental degradation should shoulder corresponding responsibilities in the search for solutions.

The programmes in Agenda 21 should support national priorities and must be viewed as a package, not a vehicle for new conditions. Additional financial resources will be central to the success of these programmes, since the cost of implementation will be beyond the means of most developing countries. Firm commitments by developed countries to cover the cost of these programmes is a basic prerequisite for sustainable development. Furthermore, the best mechanism for funding would be through a fund established specifically for the implementation of Agenda 21.

The Statement of Principles on Forests should fully recognize the sovereign right of countries to manage, conserve and develop their forest resources in accordance with their national plans and priorities. The Conference must also address the development issues that had a direct bearing on the environment, including the alleviation of poverty, promoting a favourable economic climate and ensuring an open and fair trading system.

SANDOR K. KERESZTES, Minister for Environment and Regional Policy of Hungary: In the last two years, radical political, social and economic changes have been taking place in Hungary. The conditions for democracy, the rule of law, realization of human rights and a market economy have been created. However, the transition has also been accompanied by economic recession, social conflict and recognition of the grave environmental heritage of the previous Government.

A high price will have to be paid to integrate environmental protection into economic development and to help remedy the damages caused by the fundamentally mistaken environmental policies of previous decades. For

economic structural adjustment to take place in an environmentally sustainable way, Hungary will need considerable support from the developed countries in establishing an environmentally sound economic structure with investments that will provide greater efficiency.

Hungary will sign the Climate Change Convention. The Government has issued a declaration to the effect that specific carbon dioxide emissions in the year 2000 will not exceed the average of the level of emissions in the years 1985 to 1987. The Government has also announced a reforestation plan, with a goal of 150,000 hectares by the year 2000, with the possibility of an additional 1 million in the long term. Hungary will also sign the Biodiversity Convention. The biodiversity of the Carpathian Basin, where Hungary is located, has survived in a relatively good state and its protection is not only in the interest of the countries of the Basin, but the entire northern hemisphere.

SALAHUDDIN AHMED, Deputy Executive Director of the World Food Programme (WFP): The consequences of a deteriorating environment, however threatening, cannot override the imperatives of survival for the poorest people. Sustainable development must begin with sustenance. Those who cannot survive the present cannot plan for the future.

The WFP's review of its environmental activities has shown that environmentally sustainable development has to be economically and socially sustainable, as well. Thus, its development assistance focuses on enabling poor people to be more productive and to build assets. Only then will they be in a better position to overcome their poverty.

In 1974, at the World Food Conference in Rome, Henry Kissinger summed up the mood of the international community when he said: "No child shall go to bed hungry." That was a noble sentiment, sincerely expressed. Unfortunately, there are more children going to bed hungry today than there were in 1974. That is a searing indictment of development policies. Nothing is more fundamental a human right than the right to food. The billion people who cannot currently help themselves need food and work. The world has the resources to help them, if it has the will.

PER STIG MOLLER, Minister for the Environment of Denmark: The Danish national target for carbon dioxide emission reduction is a 20 per cent reduction by the year 2005 as compared to 1988 levels. Denmark will sign the Conventions on Biodiversity and Climate Change and calls on other countries to sign and ratify them as soon as possible. It strongly supports the interim arrangements agreed to for both Conventions and supports the initiative for a declaration on forests to be followed by a legal instrument, the Rio Declaration and Agenda 21. Denmark is ready to contribute to a threefold increase of the Global Environment Facility (GEF). Its present budget estimates provide for a substantial increase in assistance for environmentally sound development in developing countries.

The total Danish energy consumption has not increased since 1973 although it has had a 40 per cent increase in gross national product (GNP). The price

of consumer goods must reflect the environmental costs and Denmark has introduced taxes on chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and carbon dioxide.

Denmark is very concerned about the Arctic region and in 1993 will co-host with Greenland a ministerial-level meeting of the eight Arctic countries in a follow-up to the 1991 Declaration of the Protection of the Arctic. Denmark has also made specific plans for action regarding energy, transportation and agriculture and has launched an extensive afforestation programme, a national action plan for Danish contribution to the conservation and sustainable utilization of tropical forests and a plan for conserving Danish nature forests to be presented to the Danish public for debate.

M. BURIC, Minister for the Environment of the Republic of Montenegro, Yugoslavia: Yugoslavia as a whole and its constituent Republics, Serbia and Montenegro, are interested in international environmental cooperation because of their location and the transboundary effects of the pollution of the water courses, seas and lakes they share with their neighbours. Because of the location of Yugoslavia and Serbia, situated downstream on the Danube, Serbia is especially interested in regional cooperation and the environmental protection of the Danube River States, more specifically the protection of the Djerdap accumulation; the opening of the Rhine-Main-Danube waterway; and cooperation on environment projects developed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the European Community, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and the Cousteau Foundation.

Montenegro's Assembly has adopted the Declaration of Montenegro as an Ecological State. A project, entitled "Montenegro -- an Ecology State" is a specific model of economic development based on the principle of full balance of production and the environment. It could serve as a pilot project in the implementation of Agenda 21. In view of its size, population and geographic characteristics, Montenegro represents a rational model study of the new concept of sustainable development.

In times of conflict, man causes destruction and damage both to himself and the environment. Yugoslavia, despite the difficult situation it is facing, is prepared to contribute to peace and tolerance, development and a mutually beneficial cooperation in accordance with international standards and overall international relations.

MIHA JAZBINSEK, Minister of Environment Protection and Regional Planning of Slovenia: The alarming state of the environment is the consequence of past development patterns and the only way out is a completely new formula of development. The paradigm of sustainable development has now been universally recognized and the technology is available to implement it. The only hindrance is the inertia of present development patterns, which is stronger in developed countries.

Developed countries have an obligation to restructure. Every investment in ecology is an investment in a new development activity. The restructuring should move the focus from the production of consumer goods to a focus on the

quality of life and survival. At the same time, developing countries must not repeat the same errors of the developed countries. In this respect, Slovenia, which is located in the "green heart" of middle Europe with extraordinary geographical and ecological diversity, needs to be extremely sensitive towards nature. The importance of nature has ordinarily determined Slovenia's development decisions.

In Slovenia's transition to parliamentary democracy and a market economy, a complete reform of environmental legislation is demanded. A law on environmental protection will soon put into an operational form practically all the documents of the Rio Conference. Slovenia is also preparing a national programme of environmental protection, an integrated waste management system, with special emphasis on waste streams, and a Slovenian ecological project, with credit lines for ecological projects. Development and other problems must not be settled by military aggression, which Serbs were attempting to do in Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Y. SEYYID ABDULAI, Director-General, Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Fund for International Development: Attempts to dilute or avoid commitments to additional concessional finance for environmental programmes amount to self-deception. It is hoped that those who still have reservations will see that a joint effort by North and South to maintain the global heritage is the only viable way forward. One country is responsible for a quarter of all carbon dioxide emissions. The South is not now the major offender in environmental pollution but it is bound to become the greater polluter with the passage of time.

Either the people of the earth prosper together, or will eventually choke to death together. Wealthy countries genuinely interested in the preservation of the environment cannot afford to not increase their aid to the poor ones. They should put parochial interests aside and examine the true conditions in developing countries. While the present population lives in abject poverty, the rapid increase in population, which unfortunately is not receiving due attention at the Environment and Development Conference, is bound to lead to greater misery. Poor countries that experienced a net outflow of $40 billion to developed countries in 1990 on debt servicing alone will have to cut down forests to earn foreign exchange for future debt service.

The most significant economic assistance to poor countries should be transfers that help countries to help themselves. It is hoped that the outcome of the Conference will not lead to the imposition of new taxes on the products of developing countries on environmental grounds.

BELLA ABZUG, Co-Chairman of the Women's Environment and Development Organization: Everywhere women are catalysts and initiators of environmental activism. Yet, policy makers continue to ignore the centrality of women's roles and needs as they make their decisions about the future. Women are outraged by the world's inequities in food, shelter, health care and education and will no longer tolerate the enormous role played by military

establishments and industries in making the twentieth century the most violent in all of human history. Resources currently consumed by the military must be urgently redirected to meet the needs of people and the planet.

Intensive organizing and lobbying has paid off, resulting in the UNCED decision which requires that Conference documents reflect both the need for women's participation and the effect on women of proposed action plans. Armed with that mandate, efforts by the women's caucus during the preparatory process resulted in numerous key recommendations approved in Agenda 21, including a major section on women in "Strengthening the role of major groups". These sections, together with the recognition of the necessity to increase the proportion of women in decision-making, constitute something of a milestone for a major Conference of this type.

Women attending the Rio events are urging the retention and strengthening of UNCED commitments to gender balance, increased numbers of women in decision-making positions, and increased funding for women's programmes, especially for the United Nations Development Fund for Women.

MARGARET SHIELDS, Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women: The magnitude of the Institute's tasks will be recognized if one reflects on how few women are present at UNCED in leading roles. That is not surprising, because throughout history women have been significantly absent from positions of power and authority, denied a role in decisions affecting their lives and have severely limited access to resources. What women have had is a very generous share of the world's work to do, although their contribution is unrecorded and their work is not counted as productive.

The evidence suggests that if there is to be a clean environment and sustainable development, principles of collaboration and inclusion must be followed at all levels. That collaboration must include all people -- women, men and children. Women are not new to environmental concerns. Indeed, they are the ultimate consumers of environmental management decisions. The Institute is actively involved in raising the awareness of policy makers and planners to the need to include women in the process of safeguarding the environment and in moving to a future of sustainable development.

Women are eager to involve themselves in the restoration of mother Earth, and insist that their perceptions and priorities be fully reflected in Agenda 21, and that appropriate language carry through into its financial arrangements and institutional structure.

O.N.R. OTHMAN, Assistant Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, speaking on behalf of the Islamic Conference's Secretary-General, Shamid Algabid: The UNCED has provided an historic opportunity for States, intergovernmental organizations and individuals to join hands on issues such as climate change, biodiversity and forestry. For the first time the need is being expressed for environmentally sound and

sustainable development that will improve the quality of life and secure basic necessities, such as food, shelter, safe drinking water, sanitation and health care.

If, however, developing countries are to make the transition to sustainable development, they must have affordable access to the best environmentally sound technology. Furthermore, international cooperation in the enforcement of environmental legislation is essential and institutional arrangements are needed to improve the United Nations ability to assess environmental risks and respond to emergencies. Mechanisms should also be developed that will allow environment and development to be examined in light of other issues, such as security, poverty and population.

The specific proposals, programmes and policy guidelines presented to the Conference contain well-defined goals. They also set forth a structure of responsibility and accountability for reaching those goals. The most important characteristic is the emphasis on "linkages" between specific sectors, such as energy and climate, with broader spheres, such as environment and development, and finally with those of even wider scope, such as economic efficiency and social equity. In this context, the Islamic Conference has common goals with Agenda 21 and, further, envisages the eradication of poverty and changing the system of incentives and penalties that motivate economic behaviour to better promote sustainability.

AKELE EZAN, Minister for Environment, Construction and Urban Planning of Côte d'Ivoire: From an African perspective, food security is critical. Threats to the environment are largely the result of low prices for export commodities. When international rates drop, the only way to recover the difference is to increase the areas under cultivation. This is the case, even though the role of preserving forests in controlling climate changes, global warming and the rise in ocean levels is well understood. Can someone who is hungry be concerned about global warming?

Indeed, the drop in commodity prices has resulted in increased production and a deterioration of the environment. One of the technical solutions is to increase yield rather than areas under cultivation, but the soil is poor and requires fertilizers produced elsewhere. Thus, the best solution is simply better prices. Increased assistance is not a sustainable solution. Unfortunately, what seems to be at work is not a law of the market, but a law of the strongest, who set prices.

Energy security is a high priority, since it could allow increased transportation of raw materials. Yet, such energy resources are expensive and intensive use damages the environment. A recent study on greenhouse gas emissions in Côte d'Ivoire indicates that the average citizen produced 1.2 tons of emissions per year, while an American produces 40 times more. This makes even clearer that the advance of the industrialized countries has been at the expense of a vastly deteriorating environment. Now, all realizes the need for sustainable development with ecologically sound means of production.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

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10 June 1992

TWENTY SPEAKERS HEARD IN CONTINUING GENERAL DEBATE AT UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 9 June -- Twenty speakers addressed the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) this afternoon as it concluded its fifth day of general debate.

Taking part in the debate were the Prime Minister of Sri Lanka, in his capacity as Chairman of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC); the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq; and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates.

Also speaking were the Minister for Agriculture and Environmental Protection and Development of Ethiopia; the Minister for Environment and Land Management of Tunisia; the Minister for Environment of Belarus; the Minister for Public Health and Environment of Belgium; the Minister for Environment of Guatemala; the Secretary of State for Environment of the United Kingdom; the Minister for Environment and Tourism of Gabon; the Secretary for Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines; and the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources of Kenya.

Other speakers were the Minister for Social Development of Mexico; the Minister for Finance of Nauru; the Personal Representative of the Life-President of Malawi and Minister for Transport and Communications; and the Minister for Agriculture and Rural Development of Djibouti.

The Conference was also addressed by the Rector of the United Nations University; the Chairman of the United States Section of the International Joint Commission; the Secretary-General of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries; and a representative of the International Council of Scientific Unions.

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Statements in Debate

LUIS DONALDO COLOSIO, Minister for Social Development of Mexico: The Rio Conference has a fundamental meaning -- that the world understands the threats implied in the ecological degradation of the planet. Nature has been systematically exploited for five centuries on this continent, but the world ecological scene has changed. Today, it is recognized that such ecological exploitation cannot be maintained on a global level. If it continues, the security of the planet will be imperiled. Thus, the present generation must take measures to avert an environmental catastrophe.

An environmental campaign that ignores social needs cannot succeed, but the well-being of people can no longer be considered without also considering the health of the ecosystem. To do so would be to threaten the health and well-being of future generations. Comprehensive environmental legislation has been enacted in Mexico, along with establishment of a federal department for the defence of the environment. Also, a unique integrated border environment programme has been developed with the United States. In Mexico City, some $4.6 million has been dedicated to cleaning up dangerous emissions. Also, Mexico has set aside 68 natural protected areas -- a total of 5.7 million hectares, which is 3 per cent of the national territory.

All countries must preserve forests, seas and animal species, control excessive expenditures on energy, eliminate poverty and hunger, and stabilize population growth, while making available the technology needed for sustainable development.

RASHID ABDULLAH AL-NOAIMI, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the United Arab Emirates: The new world order must be based on international legitimacy in settling chronic regional disputes, particularly in the Middle East. The principle of protecting the environment and natural resources of peoples under occupation is welcome. In view of the grave damage to the environment and various aspects of life caused by recent regional conflicts, the United Arab Emirates supports the Rio Declaration principle calling on States to respect international law which provides for the protection of the environment during armed conflict.

The United Arab Emirates, where water and marine life underpin economic life, heritage and tradition, considers protection of the environment a basic principle. The green area has been greatly expanded, wild flora preserved, and pastoral vegetation increased to prevent erosion and limit desertification. Due to scarce potable water, the Government has also implemented development projects to increase water resources and to rationalize their consumption. It has also undertaken plans to improve the aquatic environment and preserve fisheries, as well as laws to protect the marine environment from pollution.

The Climate Change Convention has disregarded important aspects that would bring about the delicate balance between the interests of States. A good deal of scientific data confirms that oil and natural gas contribute less

to carbon emissions than other sources of energy such as coal. The international community should invest in scientific research that would lead to safe environmental technology that uses oil and natural gas.

ZEGEYE ASFAW, Minister for Agriculture and Environmental Protection and Development of Ethiopia: Long abuse of the environment has been disastrous, leading a once proud people to beg for food or migrate, and resulting in further destruction of the environment and desertification. There is no doubt that with a convention on desertification around the corner, and with stronger elements of popular participation and local initiative, the programme to combat desertification will be on firm footing.

The Ethiopian crisis centres on the steady decline in agricultural production per person through drought and declining rainfall. What has dragged down the food production has been the phenomenal rate of population growth. Ethiopia has vast water resources which need to be tapped for irrigation and hydroelectricity. The implementation of "Agenda 21" is a prerequisite for such an undertaking through concessional financing. There is need for new and additional funds for capacity-building, technology transfer and programmes and projects that are ready for implementation.

Developing countries face the daunting challenge of revitalizing their development while dealing with pervasive poverty. Unless increased capacity is provided, the risk to future global environment is high. It is in the interest of the entire world community that the developing countries have access to the financial and technological means required to revitalize their development on an environmentally sound and sustainable basis. Ethiopia urges effective implementation, through the proper mechanism, of the agreed principles and Conventions after Rio.

D.B. WIJETUNGA, Prime Minister of Sri Lanka: Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka together comprised over a tenth of the world's land area and includ over a fifth of the world's population, and yet, they contribute less than 2 per cent of the world's gross national product. The imbalances reflected in these data are at the root of the major environment and development problems of the region.

Countries at this level of development do not have the option of foregoing the development process in order to protect the environment, whether nationally or globally. The region's problems of environmental degradation and underdevelopment persist due to resource constraints. Debt burdens and international trade practices have an oppressive effect on the economies of the region, drastically reducing the resources available for development. Agenda 21 should map out a strategy ensuring that the required additional resources are made available to the developing countries. As for global environmental degradation, the main responsibility for correcting present trends rests with the developed countries.

For the developing countries, the attainment of a reasonably high standard of living is a target that cannot be compromised. Once that imperative is accepted by the world community, the establishment of a global

partnership will no longer be seen as a mere plea for increased aid to developing countries, but rather as a true form of readjustment of international relations towards equitable sharing of the earth's resources.

SALAH JEBALI, Minister for Environment and Land Management of Tunisia: Protection of the environment must be world-wide in scope, a cause for all people and a shared responsibility. At the same time, this responsibility must be divided according to each country's capacity to ensure ecological management of natural resources.

Environmental questions have taken a higher priority since the change of government in Tunisia. An environmental department has been established and the Government is working hard to integrate environment and development. Since 1974, urban problems have had a high priority in national environmental protection policies. By 1996, almost all cities and towns will have water purification plans, and a 10-year action plan for conservation and protection of water resources has been put in place. All of this will require a commitment of $200 million yearly, of which Tunisia will be able to mobilize only 50 per cent from its own reserves.

The developed world has played a large role in the deteriorating global environment. Without new models of development, it will be very difficult to achieve sustainable development. The principle of sustainable development must be firmly enshrined at Rio, along with a firm desire to eliminate poverty in the world and a commitment of additional financial resources.

ANATOLIY M. DOROFEEV, Minister for Environment of Belarus: The ecological situation in Belarus was aggravated after the explosion at the Chernobyl nuclear-power plant. Belarus suffered more than others from that unprecedented calamity. Billions of dollars will be required to overcome and alleviate the impact of the disaster. The Chernobyl catastrophe in the centre of Europe cannot be regarded as a problem only of Ukraine, Belarus and Russia. International cooperation is needed to ensure complete assessment of the contamination and determine ways of eliminating the radioactive contamination; its effect on the human body, animal life and vegetation should be studied.

The organization of a radio-ecological monitoring system in Belarus would contribute to enhancing radiation safety. There is a great need to develop new technique, in the production of materials and foodstuffs in contaminated areas, new technical facilities to protect water supply against radionuclides and a unified system of training specialists in the field of radiation ecology.

While Belarus appreciates assistance of food, clothing and medicine, it has other needs. It is interested in seeing the projects concerning Chernobyl realized as soon as possible. International assistance can also be rendered through purpose-oriented credits granted on easy terms, to procure up-to-date technology for the rational use of natural resources, buying purification equipment and electronic measuring devices to monitor the state of the environment and acquiring production lines and complete plants for the manufacture of infant food, medicines and medical equipment for healthy institutions.

KINZA CLODUMAR, Minister for Finance of Nauru: Despite its small size and remote location, Nauru's national experience is profoundly relevant to the twin themes of environment and development. Phosphate deposits were discovered on Nauru near the beginning of this century. By the time Nauru had been granted independence in 1968, commercial mining had exhausted one third of the island's phosphate deposits, using methods that completely disregarded the environment. A tropical forest was left as an uninhabitable desert of coral tombstones. While mining has continued since independence, a portion of the proceeds are set aside to rehabilitate the land.

An island is a microcosm of the planet. Nauru's history is an omen for all the people of the earth. Of course, there is hope. Nature can be rehabilitated and, in Nauru's case, it must be. The world community should provide assistance in this labour of love. Nauru knows what must be done to restore the island, but it must have assistance to do it. Similarly, it is also known what must be done on a global scale -- eradicate poverty, limit population growth and restore the biosphere.

Unfortunately, the oceans have received scant commitment in Agenda 21. While it calls for an expedited ocean dumping ban, dumping at sea accounts for only a fraction of ocean pollution. Three fourths of ocean pollutants enter from land, but accords on land-based pollution were given only a single, noncommittal sentence in Agenda 21.

TARIQ AZIZ, Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq: Influential countries, the United States in the forefront, are primarily responsible for the pollution of the planet. The aggressive military operations launched against Iraq in the name of the Security Council have brought about large-scale, complex and dangerous environmental problems affecting its water, air and soil.

Thirty million barrels of oil and oil products are estimated to have been burned, spilled or leaked into water resources and more than 1 ton of chemical materials burned or leaked. Seventy per cent of the water treatment plants were partially halted, depriving people of drinking water and 70 per cent of heavy-water treatment stations came to a complete standstill, sending untreated heavy water and industrial waters into rivers. Drainage pumping stations which help dispose of saline waters were halted, rendering 1.4 million hectares of land unproductive.

Many thousands of tons of explosives, coupled with the impact of vehicle movement and digging operations, eliminated the green surface in the desert, causing five times as many dust and sandstorms as in 1991. The remnants of tens of thousands of rocket rounds made of depleted uranium fired by the coalition forces emit toxic chemicals and radioactive effects that threaten thousands of Iraqi people.

The link between the environmental situation in Iraq and the blockade is clear. Iraq has achieved great progress in implementing Security Council resolutions. The solution to ward off the dangers of disease and pollution lies in lifting the blockade.

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LAURETTE ONKELINX, Minister for Public Health and Environment of Belgium: Over the past 100 years, Belgium's forests have almost doubled; regional policies make use of economic and regulatory instruments, such as eco-taxes; and the country has become a leader in monitoring the movement of wastes. This useful experience can be transferred to developing countries.

Living in a society of instant gratification, time is not taken to assess the future consequences of the choices made. There are no ready-made solutions or magic potions to make Governments capable of instantly transforming society. Yet, Governments have an obligation to use all democratic instruments to achieve a transition to a model of sustainable development. Among them, information and education have primacy.

Environmental degradation is a threat to the development of everyone. Thus, at the heart of the link between environment and development is justice, injustice being a major cause of environmental degradation.

Belgium is determined that the follow-up to Rio will be characterized by concrete decisions, including the elaboration of a carbon dioxide plan and an eco-tax to reduce emissions, as well as a total moratorium on nuclear-power production.

Belgium has actively participated in the struggle against desertification and deforestation and believes there should be international conventions on those subjects. But conventions and declarations of principle lead inevitably to the question of the financial means. Belgium, despite its small size and its obligations, is determined to increase its development assistance to countries of the South.

ROBSON W. CHIRWA, Minister of Transport and Communications of Malawi: Efforts in Malawi have been directed towards giving priority to providing education and health services, arresting deforestation, land degradation and population growth. Expanding agricultural development, however, has led to widespread clearing of natural forests and woodlands. At the same time, grazing land is decreasing. Such activities have resulted in deforestation, soil erosion, loss of biological diversity and other adverse impacts. To redress the situation, the Government has carried out programmes involving the planting of millions of trees.

Malawi has a rich biological diversity -- 36 per cent of the land is under forest cover. The Government, however, does not have the financial resources to implement measures for the conservation and utilization of the forests. Lake Malawi, the third largest lake in Africa, with the world's highest number of indigenous fresh water fish species, is a major water source for industrial and domestic use. It is threatened, however, by land-based pollution sources.

The Southern African Development Coordination Conference has launched programmes to conserve the environment and natural resources of the region. Malawi has sectoral responsibility for the coordination of forestry, fisheries and wildlife, but efforts in that area are continually hampered by drought and

desertification. The Malawi Government appeals to the international community to address the problems in a separate chapter of Agenda 21. Malawi is concerned that most issues in the Biological Diversity Convention were watered down, especially in relation to the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions and other greenhouse gases.

HEITOR GURGULINO DE SOUZA, Rector of the United Nations University: One of the main thrusts of the University's programmes is in the field of environment and development. The main activities of the University in this connection stresses two aspects -- the importance of local ecological sustainability through appropriate environmental and resource management, and research and multilateral action needed to understand and deal with environmental change that could affect the earth as whole.

The University has been particularly active in the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development. Among other activities, it was chosen by the Conference's secretariat to lead the preparations for the chapter on sustainable mountain development, within the broader topic dealing with managing fragile ecosystems. It has conducted research into sustainable development in the mountain and highland areas of the world since 1978 within a joint programme considered to be the most comprehensive and established research effort in the world in this field.

ANTONIO FERRATE FELICE, Minister for the Environment of Guatemala: The Central American isthmus is the bridge that unites two continents, north and south, and which constitutes one of the wealthiest ecological areas in the world, with tropical forests of great diversity and the remnants of the pre-Columbian civilization. Guatemala recognizes its responsibility in caring for this heritage.

Every effort is being made to ensure the sustainability of its biological wealth but, at the same time, Guatemala demands access to new technology, since it has to preserve the environment while confronting poverty. The decisions that come out of Rio must assure both rationality and justice. True peace is not just the absence of conflict. Social peace is needed, which calls for changes of an internal, spiritual kind. The environmental crisis demands urgent action from developed and developing countries and the creation of new ways of living together. Attitudes and practices of the past must be changed. With good will, a high quality of life for all people in the world can be achieved.

The work of Rio must be directed at the future. There must be sustainable and ethical development to prevent environmental deterioration and ensure all people of a better future. The financial mechanisms of implementing Agenda 21 must be established and production techniques developed that are not harmful to the environment.

MOHAMED MOUSSA CHEHEM, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development of Djibouti: There are two major causes for the environmental crisis -- poor management and extreme poverty. In industrialized countries, the ecological crisis stems from industrial processes and agriculture which have caused a host of problems, including the destruction of forests.

As for the developing world, the ecological crisis is due to extreme poverty. Aggression against the environment is due to the daily struggle for survival. There is a shortage of fuelwood, wood being almost the only fuel used for the preparation and conservation of food. Hence, vegetation is being destroyed. Finally, there is a shortage of pastureland and again, the result is an alarming exploitation of vegetation. On top of all of that is the problem of drought.

Today, the drama faced by many countries of the South -- desertification and depletion of water resources, for example -- is a drama of extreme poverty. None the less, this crisis has delivered a message, a warning signal to the world. Rio should lay the groundwork for a better future. In order for that to happen, an appropriate financial mechanism must be established for the implementation of Agenda 21. Further, combating desertification is synonymous with fighting poverty for 30 per cent of the world's population.

MICHAEL HOWARD, Secretary of State for the Environment of the United Kingdom: The United Kingdom was the first country to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding on environmental affairs with Brazil. That Memorandum provided a model for the kind of partnership which is essential to tackle environmental problems.

Much of the criticism of the Climate Change Convention is wide of the mark. The Convention represents a major step forward, but it will not be the international community's last word on the subject. Much can be achieved once an evolutionary process is under way. Regarding the Biological Diversity Convention, the United Kingdom is confident that its serious concerns over the financial problems can be overcome, and it will sign the Convention.

The best vehicle for making further progress is the establishment of a Sustainable Development Commission as a mechanism for reviewing progress, for adapting and evolving programmes and for keeping responses in step with the advance of knowledge and understanding. The United Kingdom is fully committed to that process and will report fully and frankly to the Commission.

The United Kingdom has put into place a powerful mechanism for integrating the environment into every aspect of government policy-making. That pattern is being repeated in other areas of national life, including business and industry and non-governmental organizations. The Conference is crucially unique because of the way in which it has brought people other than Governments into the heart of the process. They have provided an essential input which must continue.

PEPIN MONGOCKODJI, Minister for Environment and Tourism of Gabon: In Gabon, sustainable development requires not only a profound change in production methods but an adjustment in economic and ecological values. Unless policemen are placed behind every tree and endangered species, how can a Gabonese farmer with three mouths to feed be convinced that it is best to preserve the forest and its diversity? When prices collapse, there is no alternative but to accelerate resource exploitation.

Gabon seeks to rationally manage, conserve and exploit forest resources and has legislated a forest management plan with conditions of access to zones of exploitation that could be doubled without jeopardizing forest regeneration. Economic and financial restraints must not force the increased exploitation of resources, and resources mobilized for management and conservation of flora and fauna must not conflict with development financing.

Additional resources to support sustainable development must become available to allow all countries to go beyond national interests. Human rights must not be sacrificed for the rights of nature. Gabon's priority objectives are to contribute to the ecologically rational management of forest resources, reinforce the planning ability of government institutions, pursue forestry research, assure the formation of more practical responses to the exigencies of conservation, prevent environmental degradation and support the creation and maintenance of fauna reserves.

Sustainable development and the future of the planet are too serious to be abandoned to market forces alone. If the laws of the market are to be free to decide all of this, what will be the value of a tree tomorrow?

GORDON K. DURNHIL, Chairman, United States Section, International Joint Commission: The Commission, established by the 1909 Boundary Waters Treaty, sets out principles and mechanisms to prevent disputes regarding the use of boundary waters and to settle other questions along the common boundary between Canada and the United States. It has an 80-year experience helping resolve transboundary environmental issues. The Commission provides a mechanism and an accumulated body of knowledge that are available instantly to assist Governments in preventing and resolving boundary issues.

Two fundamental attributes of the Commission's approach to resource and environmental questions are crucial: a need to take a systematic, comprehensive approach to issues, rather than a reductionist, piece-by-piece approach which has characterized and limited traditional governmental and scientific action; and the belief that complex problems cannot be solved unless all interested parties and perspectives are meaningfully involved. Mechanisms must be found to bring these interests together to address environmental and developmental issues in an effective way, and to reach a consensus and shared commitment on the action required.

FULGENCIO S. FACTORAN, Secretary of Environment and Natural Resources of the Philippines: The world must undergo a great and difficult political and economic transition if it is to attain sustainable development. Determination must overcome selfishness and greed.

In the Philippines, the Government has already approved a strategy for sustainable development and recently initiated some radical environmental decisions. For example, a total ban has been imposed on commercial logging of the remaining virgin forests. In addition, an integrated system of more than 300 protected areas has been established, and it has both ecological value and potential wealth in biodiversity. Further, an endowment has been set up, as the product of a $25 million debt-for-nature swap, the largest of its kind in the world. The millions of dollars made available each year from this endowment will be managed by non-governmental organizations for funding sustainable development programmes and projects.

The provisions of Agenda 21 will be "motherhood statements" if there is no substantial commitments from developed countries. Furthermore, expressions of concern over global warming and biological diversity will sound empty if not accompanied by an equally sincere concern over poverty and underdevelopment. As long as people remain poor, the environment will remain threatened.

PHILIP LEAKEY, Minister for Environment and Natural Resources of Kenya: Kenya firmly believes that prevention is better than cure and that education on environmental issues is the shortest and most effective route in preventing further environmental degradation.

It is unfortunate that agreement has not been reached on a set of principles on the conservation and sustainable management of forests. This might be an indication that a convention on forestry is premature. In fact, a convention on forestry could be detrimental to proper management and utilization of forests for developing countries.

On the other hand, the international community will have failed in its responsibility if it leaves Rio without committing itself to the principle of a global convention on desertification. Such a convention should be drawn up by 1994.

If the developing countries are to shoulder their responsibilities on the future health of the planet, they can only do so if the world addresses the questions of poverty, distribution of wealth, trade imbalances and the crippling debt burden. It will become increasingly difficult to convince the people in developing countries that the environment has any place in development efforts, if they continue to go hungry. As for the Convention on Biological Diversity, perhaps the most important instrument discussed in Rio, there can be no better time for the United States to join hands with the rest of the world to demonstrate their commitment to an equitable world order.

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Mr. SUBROTO, Secretary-General of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC): The OPEC, although producers and exporters of a fossil fuel which has been the target of certain interests because of carbon dioxide emissions, shares the general concern over the apparent deterioration of the air and water. Carbon dioxide is said to be responsible for roughly half of the global warming potential, yet apart from chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), it is being singled out disproportionately.

The clearly perceptible focusing of international attention and suspicion on fossil fuels in general, and carbon dioxide emissions in particular, has OPEC concerned. That concern is heightened by the possible implications of some of the measures being contemplated by industrialized countries, measures which are by no means fully backed up by scientific evidence. The OPEC urges that no drastic measures be adopted that would penalize oil producers before there is substantive evidence to show that such measures are right and necessary. It also urges that any measures taken should be compatible with continued economic growth in both developed and developing countries.

The widely publicized proposal to introduce a carbon/energy tax, beginning in 1993 at $3 a barrel and rising gradually to $10, would not be compatible with the interests of oil exporters. Such a policy by industrialized countries could hardly be interpreted by OPEC as a sign of good will. It would see it as demonstrating the complete disregard of the consumers for the well-being of the producers. The OPEC would seriously have to reconsider committing scarce financial resources to increasing and maintaining oil production capacity in order to meet the future increase projected in world oil demand. The OPEC would have no option but to defend itself with all the resources at its command.

M.G.K. MENON, representative of the International Council of Scientific Unions (ICSU): While some argue that scientific and technological advances are responsible for the problems confronting the world today, such problems actually arise from the manner in which these advances have been used. The hope of the future lies in the further development of science and technology. The world scientific community is prepared to help redefine the direction of further human development to lead to sustainable equitable progress.

The scientific community has a responsibility which it is fulfilling to provide more precise information on the status of the planet, particularly in respect to the aspects which define its well-being, and to monitor changes brought about through increased human activities. It has powerful tools to monitor change, but it is necessary to model the nature of change, reduce uncertainties and provide an analysis which will tell humanity where it is going, and what can be done to avoid dangerous pathways. All of this scientific work will need support.

The international Geosphere-Biosphere Programmes are the ICSU's most recent research programme on global change which complements the World Climate Research Programme. Together, they are the most ambitious wide-ranging programmes, which are being supplemented by two major observation systems that

are being set up. There are many ways to mitigate adverse aspects of global change. The problem lies in the sphere of human relations. Science must forge partnerships with other sectors of society to contribute to societal transformations.

Right of Reply

Exercising the right of reply, the representative of Yugoslavia expressed surprise over parts of the statement made by Slovenia which, he said, were outside the scope of the Conference. It was not the time to discuss the relationships between the former states of Yugoslavia. Despite the situation that Yugoslavia was currently facing, it was ready to contribute to peace and tolerance with its neighbours. Warfare was the greatest contributor to destruction of the environment. Yugoslavia was committed to comply with all the provisions of international law. Slovenia's statement was particularly unacceptable since the Yugoslav crisis was started with the unilateralist separatist action by that republic.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

ENV/DEV/141/Corr.1
11 June 1992

TWENTY SPEAKERS HEARD IN CONTINUING GENERAL DEBATE AT UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

CORRECTION

In Press Release ENV/DEV/141, issued on 10 June, in the statement by the Minister for Transport and Communications of Malawi, the last sentence on page 6 and the top of page 7 should read as follows:

"Malawi has sectoral responsibility for the coordination of forestry, inland freshwater fisheries and wildlife, but efforts in that area are continually hampered by drought and desertification."

The last sentence of the same paragraph, at the top of page 7, should read as follows:

"Malawi is concerned that most issues in the Climate Change Convention were watered down, especially in relation to carbon dioxide emissions and other greenhouse gases."

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

ENV/DEV/142
10 June 1992

THIRTY-ONE NATIONS SIGN CLIMATE CHANGE CONVENTION; THIRTY-ONE ALSO SIGN BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY CONVENTION

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 9 June -- By the close of the day today, a total of 31 countries have signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Thirty-one nations have also put their names to the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Both instruments were opened for signature last week at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development -- the Climate Change Convention on Thursday, 4 June, and the Biological Diversity Convention the following day.

For the Climate Change Convention to enter into force, it must be ratified, accepted, approved or acceded to by at least 50 countries; the Biological Diversity Convention requires ratification, acceptance, approval or accession by at least 30 nations.

Both instruments will remain open for signature at UNCED until 13 June; thereafter the Climate Change Convention will remain open for signature at United Nations Headquarters from 20 June 1992 to 19 June 1993; the Biological Diversity Convention from 15 June 1992 to 4 June 1993.

The following countries (listed in order of signature) have signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change: Brazil, Belgium, Norway, Liechtenstein, Australia, Iceland, Uruguay, Finland, Israel, New Zealand, Netherlands, Antigua and Barbuda, Romania, Indonesia, Bulgaria, Poland, Italy, Bahrain, Tuvalu, Nauru, Sweden, Austria, Yugoslavia, Kazakhstan, Denmark, Bangladesh, Luxembourg, Egypt, Vanuatu, Sudan and Ecuador.

Countries that have indicated their intention to sign during the course of the Conference are as follows: Algeria, Argentina, Bahamas, Belarus, Botswana, Barbados, Bhutan, Bolivia, Burundi, Canada, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Cook Islands, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Dominican Republic, Djibouti, Estonia, Ethiopia, France, Gambia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guyana, Hungary, India, Ireland, Japan, Jamaica, Kiribati, Latvia, Lesotho,

(more)

For information media—not an official record

Liberia, Lithuania, Madagascar, Maldives, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Samoa, San Marino, Seychelles, Senegal, Singapore, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, Swaziland, Switzerland, Tunisia, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, United States, Venezuela, Yemen and Zimbabwe.

The following countries have signed the Convention on Biological Diversity: Brazil, India, Netherlands, Australia, Antigua and Barbuda, Poland, Romania, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Italy, Belgium, Liechtenstein, Finland, Moldova, Nauru, Botswana, Madagascar, Sweden, Yugoslavia, Tuvalu, Uruguay, Kazakhstan, Norway, Bahrain, Kuwait, Egypt, Luxembourg, Sudan, Vanuatu and Ecuador.

Countries indicating that they plan to sign the Convention during the course of the Conference are as follows: Ethiopia, Iceland, Mexico, Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, San Marino, Turkey, Latvia, Ukraine, Belarus, Bahamas, Kenya, Bhutan, People's Republic of China, Micronesia, New Zealand, United Kingdom, Argentina, Zimbabwe, Switzerland, Yemen, Malaysia, Barbados, Peru, Germany, Maldives, Western Samoa, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Bulgaria, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Canada, Uganda, Malta, Portugal, Cuba, Swaziland, Paraguay, Ghana, United Republic of Tanzania, Mauritania, Liberia, Gambia, Syria, Suriname, Hungary, Ireland, Chile, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Algeria, Spain, Guyana, Japan, Colombia, Russian Federation, Djibouti, Senegal, Mongolia, France, Morocco, Slovenia, Tunisia and Papua New Guinea. The European Community has also indicated that it will sign the Convention.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

ENV/DEV/143
11 June 1992

ENVIRONMENT/DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE BEGINS SIXTH DAY OF DEBATE

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 10 June -- Ministers from nine countries and representatives of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), regional financial institutions and the business community made statements this morning as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) continued its general debate, now into its sixth day.

The Conference heard statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland; the Minister for External Relations of Zaire; the Secretary for External Relations of the Federated States of Micronesia; the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria; the Federal Councillor of Switzerland; and the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia.

Also speaking in the debate were the Minister for Environment and Land Management and Minister for Energy of Luxembourg; the Minister for Environment of Australia; and the Minister for Public Works, Transport and Environment of Spain.

The Director-General of the FAO addressed the Conference, as did the Presidents of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the Asian Development Bank and the African Development Bank. The President of the National Confederation of Industry of Brazil spoke on behalf of the International Chamber of Commerce.

Statements in General Debate

JACQUES ATTALI, President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development: The legacy of totalitarianism in Eastern Europe has been catastrophic, and the region is an example of disastrous environmental policies. The region contains some of the world's worst rubbish dumps; many species are threatened with extinction; many of its seas are dead; and it is responsible for one quarter of all greenhouse gases. Chernobyl showed that no one is safe from the environmental mistakes of others.

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For information media—not an official record

The cold war has been replaced by a green war. Among present concerns are the nuclear power stations in Eastern Europe, of Soviet design, many with serious defects. These represent time bombs that can go off at any moment and must be shut down. Also of concern are the civilian and military installations which produce toxic wastes, the polluted soil, water and air which have resulted, and the forests affected by acid rain. These disasters are partly the result of poor education and the powerlessness of citizens. There is no magic solution, and the damage cannot be quickly repaired. If, in their transition to a market economy, the countries of Eastern Europe copy the Western model, they will be repeating past mistakes.

Investment in the environment is needed. Environmental transition means using market mechanisms to introduce clean technology. It will require international solidarity. Assistance must come from international institutions. They already exist but lack the means and authority to deal with the problem. Measures should be taken at Rio to strengthen them.

PAAVO VAYRYNEN, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Finland: Although it seems difficult to reach an agreement on how to continue international cooperation in forests, Finland emphasizes their ecological importance. The future of mankind requires sustainable development, management and conservation of all types of forests in all countries. The future and present needs, however, encompass the sovereign right of nations to decide on the use of their natural resources. The possibilities offered by forests and forest resources should be developed and utilized for the benefit of local populations in an ecologically responsible manner, avoiding damage to other countries or the global environment. The management, conservation and sustainable development of forests in all countries should be based on national plans and programmes that account for the maintenance of ecological balance, land-use planning and sustainable use.

Finland provides financial support to developing countries in the creation of national programmes. On the basis of forestry principles to be decided at UNCED, further steps should be taken to negotiate a global convention on forests. Sustainable use and conservation of natural forests, as well as planting programmes, should receive priority on the international agenda.

An essential element in such a convention would be for the financial needs of developing countries to be met. Finland is ready to support financially such a negotiation process. It is now considering the establishment of a European Forest Institute in Finland which would contribute to the post-UNCED process in the area of temperate and boreal forest research.

EDOUARD SAOUMA, Director-General of FAO: Food and agriculture are intimately bound up with the issues of the Rio Conference, since there are no other items so closely intertwined with poverty and environmental degradation. The FAO programmes are already being retargeted to reflect sustainable agriculture and forestry conservation in ways that closely reflect the principles in Agenda 21.

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Today, 50 million people are suffering from famine, nearly 700 million from malnutrition, and the world population continues to expand drastically. This is the fact that lies behind FAO efforts to increase food production in a sustainable manner and that led FAO to join with the World Health Organization (WHO) in organizing the International Conference on Nutrition, to be held in Rome next December.

A new balance must be re-created in the trade-off between nature and consumers. In light of the increasing populations, agriculture must produce more, but it must also produce in a better way, using techniques that favour environmental regeneration. Incentives must also be given to farmers so they can get a fair return for their products. Population growth must be controlled.

At the same time, eating habits and lifestyles must change. It is time to rediscover thrift and realize that wasting food is a crime. This is certainly one area where there is plenty of room for educating the public. In the face of all these problems, it will be an act of long-term irresponsibility if a clear funding programme is not adopted to follow up the Conference.

ALEX BODRY, Minister for Environment and Land Management and Minister for Energy of Luxembourg: Luxembourg aims to achieve stabilization and to reduce its carbon dioxide emissions. It favours the introduction of taxes on energy. Luxembourg has signed the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity and expects swift ratification by its parliament. The message of those Conventions reinforces the declarations of the European Community. They are not the end to negotiation but the start of a process of decision-making leading to tangible action.

The burdens of dealing with the environment must be equitably shared throughout the international community. Any development plan must fit into the broader framework of fighting poverty. The international community must succeed in controlling present demographic trends and that cannot be achieved without birth control or family planning.

Luxembourg is disappointed with those who hesitate to enter into commitments at the Conference because of purely national and egoistic interests. Pursuing "business or politics as usual" was suicidal in the long term. A Luxembourg opinion poll showed that 85 per cent were greatly concerned about the environment and 88 per cent were ready to pay higher prices for an environmentally sound economy. However, three fourths rejected any increase in the price of water or energy for their homes. When directly affected, their attitude hardly differed from that of people in other industrialized countries. Politics, however, cannot just follow public opinion. Rather, it must guide it and take into account the long-term view.

BAGBENI ADEITO ZENGEYA, Minister for External Relations of Zaire: Despite a determination to protect its environment, Zaire suffers from the same problems as other developing countries and lacks the resources to put

into effect its action programme on the environment. Poverty has caused an exploitation of the environment, including deforestation, and a rural exodus to urban centres has brought on "squatter areas", with their problems involving waste management and drinking water supply.

Zaire will sign the Rio Declaration, although an earth charter would have been preferable. It will also sign the Biodiversity Conventions even though, by signing, Zaire does not intend to give up sovereignty over its resources.

Zaire will also sign the Climate Change Convention although the Convention will be "stillborn" if it is not followed by a programme to reduce carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases. As for forest management, too much emphasis has been placed on timber products in the discussions. Zaire, which has vast areas of protected forest, believes that countries should receive compensation for setting aside forests for conservation purposes, for being the "lungs" of the planet. Finally, a sustainable development commission should be established, and additional resources must be found for implementing Agenda 21. It will be a pity if, 20 years after Rio, the train of humanity has still not left the station because of a lack of energy and financial resources.

RESIO S. MOSES, Secretary of the Department of External Affairs of the Federated States of Micronesia: In former times, the land and sea supported Micronesia's food needs. But the transition to a market economy, along with population growth, has introduced needs that are causing drastic increases in the harvesting of limited resources. As a result of wasteful harvesting methodologies, there is concern about the future of many species of marine and plant life previously thought to be inexhaustible. Another threatening phenomenon is that of pollution generated by uncontrolled shoreside and port activities.

The present generation of island dwellers is the first to find cause for worry over favourable climate and the survival of their islands. The mental picture of entire island nations slowly disappearing beneath the waves is a graphic one, and Micronesia is grateful that that grim prospect is recognized in the Climate Change Convention, which Micronesia will sign. If Micronesia is to be saved, the stabilization of concentrations of greenhouse gases at a level which is safe for human life must be achieved. It can only be achieved through drastic reductions in current levels of carbon dioxide emissions by the developed countries.

Virtually all oceanic islands and low-lying coastal areas stand to suffer the first consequences of human-induced climate change. Low-lying island countries are already experiencing the first effects of climate change brought on by global warming. Patterns and intensity of storm activity throughout the Pacific have changed noticeably for the worse within the past decade, and the Micronesian region has also been experiencing a prolonged drought, brought on by the shift in Pacific ocean currents.

ANDRES GONZALEZ, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Colombia: In Colombia, which has veritable water factories and natural regulators of water flows, 10 per cent of the planet's biological diversity is represented on land that represents 0.8 per cent of the earth's surface. That invaluable patrimony is adversely affected by the risks of climatic change, depletion of the ozone layer and contamination of the oceans and deforestation.

Colombia's constitutional charter points to the obligation to preserve natural resources and promote sustainable development, and mandates the protection of ethnic diversity and the right of indigenous people to conserve their territories and their cultural identity. The human element is an integral part of Colombia's concept of environmental development. The social, economic and political demands of the people are confronted by barriers to market expansion, access to technology and financial resources. A just and sustainable economic order is urgently needed. The relationship between improving the environment and eradicating poverty is obvious in countries such as Colombia, where environmental degradation is compounded by the occurrence of all kinds of violent conflicts.

Colombia welcomes the recognition of the right of the countries of origin to their genetic resources and to enjoyment of the economic, commercial and scientific benefits stemming from those resources. Of particular importance in Agenda 21 is the conservation of mountain ecosystems and the integrated approach to forests.

ROSLYN KELLY, Minister for the Arts, Sport, the Environment and Territories of Australia: In Australia during the past two years, government, industry, trade unions and environmental organizations have worked on ecologically sustainable development strategies for major sectors of the economy, including agriculture, forestry, fisheries, mining, energy, manufacturing, tourism and transport. Using these strategies, a national strategy is now under development. This year, a commonwealth environment protection agency was established and, at the same time, a comprehensive intergovernmental agreement on the environment was adopted. In 1990, interim planning targets for greenhouse gas emissions were adopted, seeking to stabilize emissions at 1988 levels by the year 2000 and reduce them by 20 per cent by the year 2005.

Yet, while progress in Australia and its region is vital, international effort is the real key to solving environmental and development issues. Australia has already signed the Climate Change and Biodiversity Conventions and urges all countries to ratify them as soon as possible. Both Conventions are fundamental to equitable action on those two pressing issues.

As a continent with vast areas of semi-arid land, Australia understands the toll caused by desertification and supports the development of lasting solutions to the problem of desertification in Africa. As for additional funds for developing countries, the Global Environmental Facility, appropriately restructured to reflect the views of all its members, is the most appropriate channel for any increased funding.

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KIMIMASA TARUMIZU, President of the Asian Development Bank: Environmentally sound development is the operational principle of the Asian Development Bank and central to its medium-term strategic plan. Environmental lending now accounts for almost 20 per cent of the total lending operations and covers activities in reforestation, industrial pollution control and energy conservation.

Effective implementation of Agenda 21 will require new and innovative financing approaches. Thus far, the focus seems to be on ozone depletion, climate change and biological diversity. These are serious concerns, but a number of regional environmental issues also require urgent action, including land and water degradation, deforestation and air pollution. There is also need to establish stronger links between the alleviation of poverty and environmental protection efforts. This is particularly true in the Asia-Pacific region, which has more then half a billion people living in extreme poverty.

The Asian Development Bank's country operational programme for 1994-1998 could incorporate a large component of environmental lending. The Bank's commitment to the environmental well-being of Asia and the Pacific is matched by its willingness to deploy increasing resources in support of environment and sustainable development. This is probably the best contribution it can offer to the Rio Conference.

ALBANO FRANCO, President of the National Confederation of Industry of Brazil, on behalf of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC): Achieving a balance between economic growth and sound environmental practices in business operations is crucial to the very survival of business. There will be no solution to poverty, one of the biggest threats to the environment, without economic growth in the developing countries. As populations increase, it will be for business to provide the technologies, processes and products which will stimulate economic growth and, at the same time, protect the environment.

Many of the world's biggest companies have committed themselves to improving their environmental performance through a voluntary programme known as the Business Charter for Sustainable Development, the business community's equivalent of the "Earth Charter". Today, sound environmental management is, quite simply, good business. The ICC invites all companies to add their commitment to environmental excellence through the Business Charter.

The business community's message is this: create conditions under which business can most effectively do its job, and there will be improvements in environmental performance. Governments should establish clear and consistent environmental goals within a regulatory framework that utilizes market-based techniques to encourage business to achieve sustainable development in the most cost-effective manner. Governments should also coordinate their trade and environmental policies, avoiding unilateral actions and "green protectionism".

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BABACAR NDIAYE, President of the African Development Bank: A review of some of the issues affecting Africa shows that the southern region is affected by a drought of unprecedented proportions; in the north and Sahel, the threat is the ever-encroaching Sahara; in the Horn of Africa, civil strife has compounded problems brought about by natural calamities, thus making impossible development of any kind; the technological content of African agriculture remains among the lowest in the world. In the face of rapid population growth, the dangers of food insufficiency are real and will get worse. The African forest is dwindling and threatened with total disappearance.

The Bank's mandate is to finance the economic development and social progress of Africa. The challenge facing it is how to assist African countries to translate the outcome of UNCED into action. As an African institution doing business in Africa, the Bank should be among the most appropriate vehicles for channeling new and additional resources for sustainable development.

Africa is responsible for its own destiny, but its development partners must increase the volume of concessional resources to enable African countries to implement programme areas of Agenda 21. Such resources would ensure smooth implementation of ongoing economic adjustment programmes and allow those countries to meet the incremental cost of sustainable development.

IKE NWACHUKWU, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Nigeria: Africa is faced with the problems of desertification, drought, quality and supply of fresh water, as well as soil and marine erosion. Two fifths of Africa's land mass has been turned into desert. Desertification and drought should qualify for adequate funding. Only the speedy conclusion of an international convention on desertification, however, can reassure Africa and other regions with deserts of the incernational community's commitment to address this problem.

The establishment of the "Dump Watch", a Nigerian initiative, has played a significant role in the continuous monitoring of toxic and hazardous wastes dumping. The relentless efforts of the Green Peace movement are also to be commended. Nigeria has made environmental impact assessment mandatory for major development projects. An ecological fund has also been created. Into it 2 per cent of its consolidated revenue is contributed for slowing the problems of ecological degradation and pollution.

Africa's external debt is the single most important factor inhibiting its development efforts. Closely linked is the issue of poverty. Now is the time for creditor and debtor nations to set a firm date to resolve all debt problems. Another crucial issue is the transfer of technology. It is imperative to support the provision of new and additional financing to developing countries to enable them to achieve sustainable development.

FLAVIO COTTI, Federal Councillor of Switzerland: Switzerland advocates the introduction of economic instruments that reflect the ecological value of products and is introducing such instruments into the political environment

and preparing the necessary judicial bases for that approach. The carbon dioxide tax is important and should be introduced simultaneously in all or many of the industrialized countries. Switzerland formally invites countries who wish to act rationally to take the first steps together.

It was particularly important to establish stable structures for international cooperation and the development of international public law. The Convention on Climate Change, although perhaps too timid, is the first sign showing that the industrialized countries are willing to assume their responsibilities. Switzerland has shown its willingness to reduce carbon dioxide levels. It is urgent that the Convention on Climate Change enter into force and that it be developed as quickly as possible.

Switzerland has allocated new additional funds to finance measures with regard to the global environment in the developing countries. It would like to see a structural reform of the Global Environment Facility and a reconstitution of the Fund in regard to the principle of burden-sharing. The idea of levying a new tax on fossil fuel deserves greater study.

JOSE BORRELL, Minister for Public Works, Transport and Environment of Spain: Three elements are basic to solving the world's environmental crisis: making development and environment compatible; using economic instruments that reflect the market; and understanding that action must take place at different levels. Economic growth models and consumption patterns must change. If present trends continue, population growth will explode just as resources, such as water and forests, decline. The solution is not zero growth, as was proposed several years ago. To the contrary, wiping out poverty is essential to the future of the planet.

Spain can be a link between the North and South, since many of its environmental problems have been caused by the speed of its development in recent years and its quick transition to an industrial country.

Protecting the environment is an economic problem, one of optimizing the use of limited resources and resources that are unequally distributed and developed. In practice, Rio amounts to a Conference on the world economy. No one will save what is cheap for them to acquire. The market place and democracy are the only tools available. In the future, the national arena must be transcended.

All countries are aware that global problems, such as biological diversity, cannot be solved at the local level. For sustainable development to be achieved, the economic structures of production and consumption must undergo change, which might include a new definition of what is meant by well-being.

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United Nations

Press Release

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TWENTY-TWO SPEAKERS EXPRESS CONCERNS IN GENERAL DEBATE AT ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 10 June -- A total of 22 speakers addressed a variety of environment and development issues as the United Nations Conference concluded its sixth day of general debate in Rio de Janeiro.

The speakers this afternoon were the Foreign Ministers of Bangladesh and of Malaysia, the Minister for the Environment of Ireland, the Minister for Petroleum and Natural Resources of Saudi Arabia, the Minister for Environment and Tourism of Rwanda, the Minister for Natural Resources of Gambia, the Minister for Agriculture and Natural Resources of Cyprus, the Minister for Natural Resources, Energy and Mining of Costa Rica, the Special Representative of the President of Liberia, the representatives of Libya and of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Director of Fisheries Research of the Cook Islands, the Chief of Staff of the Governor of American Samoa, and the Secretary of Natural Resources of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Other speakers were the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Director of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, the President of the International Association of Universities, the Head of Environmental Affairs of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC), a representative of the International Facilitating Committee and a representative of the Comite Intertribal, a non-governmental organization.

Statements on General Debate

A.S.M. MOSTAFIZUR RAHMAN, Foreign Minister of Bangladesh: His country is well aware of the global environment crisis and its causes in over-industrialization, over-consumption and poverty. Bangladesh, despite the constraints it faces, is doing all it can to preserve and protect its environment and promote development in a sustainable manner.

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For information media—not an official record

Those who have been primarily responsible for depleting and polluting the world's resources should assume a correspondingly major responsibility in bearing the cost of cleaning up. They must commit themselves to changing their own production and consumption patterns and reduce their wasteful use of the world's resources. They must help others change to ecologically friendly development models. For its part, Bangladesh has had little -- or, at most, marginal -- impact on global environmental degradation. Yet, it might suffer the most from such phenomena as global warming and climate change. Thus, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) should make arrangements for adequate compensation so that, not being a polluter, Bangladesh does not have to pay.

Also, UNCED should contribute to change in consumer habits in a way that will have a positive effect on the environment. One way of doing that would be to show a preference for natural products, if necessary through changes in trade rules and practices. For example, Bangladesh produces jute, but jute production is threatened by competition from cheaper, non-biodegradable synthetics. If a fair return is not provided to jute growers, a nature-friendly fiber will simply wither away, while the environment is further damaged by the disposal of another synthetic.

MICHAEL SMITH, Minister for Environment of Ireland: Real economic development needs face Ireland. Unemployment is unacceptably high, and the country aspires to closer economic and social integration with its more developed European Community partners. Compromising its environmental resources offers no solution to these problems. Development must be sustainable, and all the key economic sectors in Ireland depend on a clean and unpolluted environment.

Ireland will sign the two Conventions before the Conference, and it strongly supports the work on forest protection and desertification. The Rio Declaration has done an important job in developing and building on the principles of the Stockholm Conference, but more must be done.

Ireland attaches paramount importance to partnership and sustainable development as the means of enabling developing countries to achieve acceptable standards of living. Although one of the less developed economies among the developed ones, Ireland has committed itself to implementing a planned programme of increases in its official development assistance (ODA). It recognizes the important role which the transfer of appropriate technologies can play in economic and technological development and it funds fellowship programmes and other educational courses to train personnel at all levels.

AHMED ESMAT ABDEL-MAGID, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States: The League has long paid attention to the importance of environmental action because of the location of much of the Arab world in dry or semi-dry zones, in addition to the fast rates of demographic growth. Attempts to levy taxes on oil consumption would complicate economic conditions and could bring about undesirable repercussions with potentially adverse effects on prospective cooperation.

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It is imperative to develop constructive, international cooperation that takes into consideration the optimal utilization of energy resources and recognizes the importance of ensuring the availability of environmentally safe and clean technologies in the twin processes of producing and consuming oil. It is also necessary to direct attention to the environmental deterioration and its adverse effects on resources and the way of life of Arab citizens in the occupied Palestinian and Arab territories as a result of the Israeli occupation authorities' arbitrary practices, with environmentally adverse effects.

Efforts to overcome the problem of the scarcity of potable water and to control desertification and drought need to be enhanced. Action should be expedited to draw up an international anti-desertification convention. Resources resulting from cuts in military expenditure should be re-directed to finance projects aimed at addressing problems of environment and human development. The League calls for action to turn the Middle East into a zone free from nuclear, chemical and neutron weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

SADAKO OGATA, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR): The mixed landscape of greater displacement of refugees and hope for solutions is closely related to the issues of development and the environment. First, more and more people are being forced to flee for a combination of reasons, due as much to population growth, poverty, famine and environmental degradation as to mass violations of human rights. Second, refugee movements themselves can lead to environmental destruction. Third, environmental degradation not only contributes to armed conflict, but is an inevitable consequence of it. Thus, there is a fundamental link between displacement, development and the environment.

The UNHCR has reinforced its efforts to address environmental problems. It recognizes that assistance to meet the needs of refugees must avoid a negative environmental impact. While providing energy, shelter, water and sanitation, it is trying to minimize the impact on the surroundings. It attempts to have refugees themselves become the agents for preserving and rehabilitating the environment of the host country. For example, refugees provide much of the labour for reforestation in Pakistan.

The UNHCR has for some years provided for reforestation projects, the largest of which is in Pakistan where dwindling forest areas were devastated by the influx of more than 3 million Afghan refugees. This joint World Bank/UNHCR project has reforested more than 130,000 acres of land in refugee hosting areas. Other reforestation projects are in the Sudan, Guinea, Somalia, Rwanda, Malawi, Mexico, Honduras and Iran.

ABDULLAH HAJI AHMAD BADAWI, Foreign Minister of Malaysia: Malaysia has taken steps to integrate environmental considerations into its development, and project planning and environmental inputs have been incorporated into resource and regional development. In the current Sixth Malaysian Development Plan, the Government's commitment to the conservation and enhancement of the

environment is strongly emphasized. The Plan provides for the sustainable management of forest resources, and massive reforestation programmes will be carried out.

Other plans call for the imposition of an export levy and quota on 21 species of sawn timber and all species of veneer; reduction of the annual coupe in the peninsula from 72,100 to 52,250 hectares; action by the Government to increase the area of the Permanent Forest Estate in Sarawak by 1.5 million hectares, to reduce logging and to increase totally protected areas; and reduction of Sabah's log production. Additional forested areas will be designated as forest reserves, animal sanctuaries and national recreational parks. Penalties will be imposed on industries for non-compliance and contravention of laws.

The North must help the South to accelerate its development by providing the necessary flow of resources and technology. A fundamental question is whether a select group of developed countries will continue to manipulate the levers of power through the Security Council, the Bretton Woods institutions and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) or whether they are prepared to share the management of global issues in a partnership that is more responsive to the needs of the environment and development.

HISHAM NAZER, Minister for Petroleum and Mineral Resources of Saudi Arabia: As one of the largest producers and exporters of oil, Saudi Arabia is interested in developing its oil industry to meet global needs, and has adopted safety measures to reduce harmful environmental effects to a minimum. The oil industry is the most important sector of the economy and the country is trying to diversify its economic base.

The international community must pay due attention to the danger of environmental disaster caused by armed conflict. In the Gulf crisis, Saudi Arabia faced such a disaster, which was deliberately touched off. There is also no secret of the environmental damage caused by the occupation of Arab territories, from the pollution of the water sources to the seizure of Arab lands and the cutting down of trees for new settlements.

Saudi Arabia supports a new international order leading to economic development and improved means of dealing with the deterioration of the environment in ways that will not lead to trade policies that use the environment issue for arbitrary discrimination and to limit international trade.

In finding solutions to environmental problems, no country should take measures, using the environment as an excuse, which will adversely affect the development of others. Industrialized countries should provide financial assistance for environmental activities. The use of unsafe technology and energy sources, such as nuclear energy, should not be propagated.

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Proposals to impose taxes on certain sources of energy should be discouraged. Imposing such taxes will not solve the problem or reduce emission levels. The economic costs of these taxes will be transferred from developed to developing countries.

EDUARDO PORTELLA, Deputy Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): Today, development itself is threatened, first by the extreme disparity between the "haves and have-nots" and second, by the recognition that the planet is finite and fragile. The role of man as predator, seeking the help of the gods to rule over creation, is over.

Another kind of development is necessary -- human, sustainable and based on solidarity. If it requires growth, it cannot be limited to a quest for favourable short-term indicators nor the authoritative imposition of schemes decided from above. The democratic participation of the people concerned will be necessary.

It is an illusion to believe that problems of environment and development can be resolved by a purely technical or exclusively political approach. Some have suggested that sustainable development requires the modification of lifestyles, but what is a transformation of lifestyle if not a change of culture? Cultural development in these times is all the more crucial, given that culture and knowledge are at the heart of the changes affecting production systems and the emergence of new technologies.

As for the scientific concerns of the Conference, they are UNESCO's priority areas. The success or failure of the decisions taken at UNCED could depend in large degree on science and technology transfer to the South. To cope with the complexity of the questions, unprecedented alliances will have to be built. The UNESCO is prepared to contribute, within its areas of competence, to the UNCED follow-up.

GASPART RUHUMULIZA, Minister for Environment and Tourism of Rwanda: In Rwanda, the main environmental problems -- deforestation and soil erosion -- are linked to rapid population growth and an underdeveloped economy. The problem of the environment is part of a difficult economic picture. There is heavy indebtedness and a serious trade imbalance, due to the low price of coffee. Population pressure has led to decreased development, with soil exhaustion from overuse of farmland, which in some cases has led to famine and deforestation, the result of forests being cut for firewood.

Therefore, control of the population is one of the first steps in protecting the environment, since the imbalance between production and population is at the heart of Rwanda's environmental problems. At the same time, it is clear that many of these problems are brought on by the imperatives of survival.

Rwanda has adopted a programme to address these problems, but needs support from the outside. The national environmental strategy includes family planning, environmental sanitation, health, soil conservation, agricultural

development, forestry development, ecological tourism and conservation of protected areas. International financial institutions should identify activities where they can supply help.

Unfortunately, Rwanda has also had imposed on it a ridiculous war in the northern part of the country, which has had a harsh effect on the environment and economy, particularly in forestry, transport, education and health. Nearly 120,000 persons have been displaced. The international community must strongly condemn this aggression and help rebuild the ecosystems that have been destroyed.

MARCOS TEREMA, Comite Intertribal: The Indian people know nature and practise sustainable development as a daily routine, not as an "alternative approach". The international community cannot spend millions of dollars on UNCED and not listen to what nature has to tell it, or to what Indians have to say about "Agenda 21". They did not come to the Conference to play at being Indians but to fight for their survival and the survival of the planet. When the white man's lungs fail because they cannot breathe, so will the lungs of the Indians.

When the Indians followed the proceedings of the Conference's Preparatory Committee, they were embarrassed to see countries of the third world rushing after the first-world countries to ask for handouts. That was not dignity. Indians want dignity and when the white man realizes that they are not a threat, Indians will participate.

Indians have written their own Earth Charter, the Kari-Oca Declaration, which they are presenting to the President. It is straight-forward and simple. It represents the spiritual strength that mankind is losing and states that Indian people, from the greatest to the least, were marching towards the future along the footsteps of their fathers which are imprinted on the land. The Indian people will continue to struggle to retain their right to self-determination and to decide on their own form of government, education and cultural identity with no outside interference. When the UNCED documents are signed, the Indians, who are most familiar with nature, will not be sitting among the participants.

PATRICIA NGAMATA TUARA, Director for Fisheries Research of the Cook Islands: The Cook Islands are particularly interested in those sections of Agenda 21 dealing with the protection of the atmosphere, oceans and seas. It offers to host the first international conference of small island States in 1993 to discuss sustainable development and its implementation. Agenda 21's success rests with its chapter on the tools of implementation -- finance, technology and institutions. Although willing to participate in the global sustainable use of resources, the Cook Islands' capability to take action effectively is constrained by limited physical, human, financial and technical resources.

The country is, nevertheless, participating in programmes to implement and manage its coastal zone; preserve the biodiversity of its flora and fauna;

manage wastes and chemicals; and educate and train its people in environmental awareness. Subregional organizations provide technical and financial assistance and act as an effective channel for communication. The Biodiversity Convention can assist the Cook Islands in preserving the endangered kakerori or fly-catcher bird, which is endemic to the country. It will also help in preserving the traditional knowledge of medicinal plants and protecting Cook Island coral reefs.

The Cook Islands appeals to the industrialized countries to cooperate in resolving global warming and its related adverse environmental consequences. It applauds those nations which have made commitments to targets and timetables for the reduction and stabilization of greenhouse gas emissions.

BISMARK KUYON, Speaker of the Interim Legislative Assembly and Special Representative of the President of Liberia: There is need for a fresh initiative in restructuring global economic relations between developed and developing countries.

The agreements reached, while not comprehensive, represent an important first step in the global quest for sustainable development. The two Conventions set clear goals which, when implemented, could help protect the environment while addressing other concerns. The emerging consensus, reflected in these two texts and Agenda 21, requires commitment and implementation. In the coming months, Governments must transform these agreements into implementable plans of action. This will require the commitment of developed countries to forge a new global partnership with developing countries, based on mutual respect and equity.

Six fundamental issues must be addressed: the debt burden of developing countries must be lessened; new and additional financial resources must be provided to them. They must be provided access to technologies on a preferential basis; as well as just compensation for the acquisition and use of the natural resources of developing countries, including biodiversity; access to training and management techniques, particularly on integrating the environmental dimension into national development planning processes; and equitable access by developing countries to global market opportunities. Unless alternative sources of assistance are made available, Liberia will find it very difficult, if not impossible, to be an active and responsible participant in the global imperative.

VILI FUAVAO, Director, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme: Islands of the Pacific region share a common thread of evolutionary and human history. Their people have developed unique cultures and attitudes of self-reliance. They share a common aspiration for economic development and improved living standards, yet they do not want the pursuit of material benefits to undermine cultural values or cause permanent harm to the resources that have sustained island life for centuries. Concern to avoid the catastrophic effects of climate change and to conserve the wealth of species and ecosystems underlies South Pacific interests in global Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity. The Pacific islands have continually

expressed grave concern that climate change and sea-level rise threaten their livelihood.

Together with those developed countries which have long-standing ties with the region, the countries of the South Pacific have demonstrated that they have common concerns regarding the environment and development. Not enough has been done, however, to link environment and development concerns with economic planning and decision-making.

The South Pacific Regional Development Programme is an intergovernmental organization responsible for the coordination, protection and management of the environment of the South Pacific. Its membership includes 24 countries and administrations of the South Pacific, France and the United States. Scattered over more than 30 million square kilometres, there are often economies of scale that can be achieved through the delivery of assistance at a regional or multi-country level.

HERNAN BRAVO, Minister for Natural Resources, Energy and Mining of Costa Rica: Costa Rica is proud of its environmental record. It has totally protected 12 per cent of the country through a system of national parks. Another 14 per cent come under other forms of protection, such as forest reserves. It is now working on a system of biological corridors to link all national parks and developing areas of conservation, using the concepts of "nucleus" -- complete protection -- and "buffer zones". Costa Rica has done this by following models of sustainable development that could be emulated by many other countries. In doing so, Costa Rica has made it clear that economic development and protection of the environment are part of the same equation.

The developed countries must exercise their leadership to enable all countries to achieve sustainable and socially just development. The agreements reached should not lead to confrontation. All people live on the same planet and must be partners in creating a more just human society, where development takes place in harmony with the environment.

The developed societies must contribute financially and with technology, but more is needed in the policy area as well. There must be follow-up to the Rio Conference and, to assist that follow-up, Costa Rica has proposed the creation of the Earth Council which, acting impartially and transparently, would ensure execution and implementation of Agenda 21. This initiative already has the support of the Presidents of Central American countries and many other Governments.

KANG HUI WON, Deputy Premier of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea: The issue of financial resources and smooth transfer of technology is still far from a satisfactory solution. New and additional financial resources are essential for Agenda 21 to succeed. Without an adequate financial mechanism, many of the resolutions and pledges made at UNCED will remain on paper.

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There must be a complete ban on nuclear testing and a comprehensive halt to military exercises throughout the world. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea advocates a universal nuclear-free peace zone. It places great importance on improving environmental conditions, especially in the workplace. Recently, the Government took drastic measures to enforce its environment protection law, increasing State funding for reducing gas emission in industry. The Government also wages mass campaigns to clean up the environment and to reforest the countryside.

Although the Government is not completely happy with the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity, they both represent a first significant step in the right direction. The Government will also endorse the Rio Declaration with the understanding that it contain the basic principles for a continuation of negotiations.

ZVONIMIR SEPAROVIC, Minister of the Government of Croatia: War is highly detrimental to human well-being, to the human environment and development. During Serbia's aggression against Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, the environment was subject to deliberate destruction and devastation. Many cultural and natural monuments, sacred buildings, towns and villages, industrial plants and public facilities have been destroyed and the natural environment devastated. The ultimate goal of the military aggression is not only to gain tactical advantage in the field but also to destroy numerous and highly valuable assets of Croatia.

The UNCED must take into account the aggressive nature of human behaviour expressed in the violence against other human beings and the environment. The Rio Declaration has to include a condemnation of war and express concern for the irreparable consequences of war operations. It should include a request for international action against a new kind of crime which might be called "ecoside".

Croatia supports a global approach to solving environmental and developmental problems. The first priority is to end war. Then the intentional community needs to stop pollution as a precondition for creating a better world. The blame for present environmental problems lies entirely with the aggressive, irrational, selfish, narrow-minded, uncontrolled behaviour of mankind.

ALI AHMED ELHOUDERI, Permanent Representative of Libya to the United Nations: The international community should work to overcome environmental problems and agree to specific and concrete measures that define the responsibilities of States. War and pollution had a direct impact on Libya's environment and development. Development was still impeded in areas where mines were planted during the Second World War. The States responsible should provide the necessary information to assist in their removal and provide compensation for the damage caused.

Wastes discarded by foreign ships have polluted the Mediterranean. Hundreds of tons of discarded pesticides have caused an ecological imbalance

in the Mediterranean. The situation is worsened by States from outside the region which exploit the Mediterranean's wealth. Libya calls on all to desist from those practices. It is also concerned by the increase in the export and movement of toxic wastes as well as their disposal in developing countries. Given the grave impact of those wastes on humanity and other living organisms, Libya calls for those practices to cease.

Libya also urges effective international law to halt the disposal of dangerous wastes and for a special session of the General Assembly to examine issues which threaten the environment. Libya has environmental programmes which include the planting of hundreds of trees and the construction of an artificial river to move water from southern Libya to the north. Its ambitious development has been hampered by the unfair imposition of Security Council sanctions.

SAJO TOURAY, Minister of Natural Resources and Environment of Gambia: Poverty, as a cause and consequence of environmental degradation, is one of the critical impediments to development, a vicious cycle that causes misery and suffering among millions of people. Decisive action must be taken to eradicate it.

The African countries have also proposed an international convention on drought and desertification in an effort to arrest this phenomenon, which has caused not only the loss of productive land and livestock, but socially destabilized the region. The inability of the land to support its occupants has generated a migration from the rural areas to urban centres, an influx that has stretched governments to their limit.

African countries have neither the technology nor the financial resources to cope with these problems alone. Drought and desertification also contribute to a loss of biodiversity. Because of its close links with biodiversity and climate change, the desertification issue deserves the same attention and commitment that has been demonstrated on other global environmental concerns.

The Conventions on Biological Diversity and Climate Change are a positive start in attempts for sound environmental management. While it is a good beginning, the Climate Convention should in due course have strict monitoring and control mechanisms with definite limits on the emissions of greenhouse gases.

WILLIAM P. COLEMAN, III, Chief of Staff to the Governor of American Samoa: Pacific islanders share many of the same concerns -- global warming and sea-level rise, transportation and disposal of toxic waste and the threat of oil pollution, to name just a few.

Global warming may lead to glacial melting and sea-level rise, which would have dire consequences for the Pacific Islands. Hazardous and toxic wastes have been produced world-wide and the transportation of these wastes must be accomplished in a safe and responsible manner. Citizens in the

countries where the wastes have been generated do not want storage sites near their homes.

Consequently, disposal of hazardous wastes in remote locations, including the Pacific Islands, has been proposed. Remoteness, of course, is in the eye of the beholder. Improper disposal of toxic chemicals in the past has led to the contamination of fish as a food source in Pago Pago Harbour. Hazardous materials have also been transported, stored and incinerated at Johnston Atoll in the Pacific. Other sites should be considered, rather than transporting the waste from sites around the world through the Pacific region.

One of the greatest threats to the marine environment is oil pollution. Accidents involving the transportation and transfer of fuel and oil are prime sources of pollution in the Pacific. Strategies to prevent oil spills and technology for rapid containment and clean-up must be implemented. In the Pacific, environmental degradation threatens life itself and the unique living patterns found there. The importance of preserving and protecting the environment and its relation to the survival and cultures of indigenous people must be recognized in all global and individual country actions.

ANDREAS GAVRIELIDES, Minister for Agriculture and Natural Resources of Cyprus: The interlocking crises of world poverty and hunger are manifestations of deeply rooted problems stemming from the failure of all conventional economic systems to provide for intragenerational and intergenerational equity and the demand for bold new initiatives. The UNCED comes at the right moment to act as a catalyst and set the guidelines, framework and required ways and means to achieve humanity's environment and development goals. The Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 meet that objective.

The required additional financial flows must be made available to the countries in need. Developing countries should also be assisted to tap the potentials of technology. Those issues form the core of the requirements to achieve sustainable development and address major environmental problems. In the Mediterranean region, Cyprus actively participates in efforts to conserve the common natural endowment. The country has benefited from its association with international organizations and institutions in practically all aspects of its development process and expects that association to be further enhanced in the field of environmental protection.

The Biodiversity Convention represents a step forward in the protection of the earth's biological diversity, which Cyprus supports. It also welcomes, as a first step in the right direction, the Climate Change Convention. As an island State with excessive reliance on its coastal areas, Cyprus is naturally concerned about the prospects of sea-level rise.

WALTER J. KAMBA, President of the International Association of Universities: The stakes are too high to contemplate failure. Humankind has recognized, at last, its unsustainable behaviour and has decided to take decisive steps to mend its ways. The UNCED's success will be measured by the degree of agreement on Agenda 21 and the decisive action that must follow it.

Universities must make a difference to the human condition. Even if, by definition, universities exist for the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, they also have a responsibility for the development of people. They can no longer be on the periphery of the debate on sustainable development. They must move to the centre.

Sustainable development is an imprecise term, difficult to apply in practice. Universities have a unique capacity to bring intellectual rigour to the study of sustainable development, which touches on some of the most politically sensitive questions faced by the international community.

Collectively, universities can attempt to find answers to those questions in an apolitical fashion, for the benefit of the entire human race. What is at issue is how to rectify the gross imbalances between rich and poor, in particular; most glaring is the technological imbalance. Sustainable development requires the redressing of those imbalances.

STANISLAUS S. SANGWENI, of the Department of Economic Planning and Environment of the African National Congress of South Africa (ANC): South Africa must forge a political democracy that will breed an environmentally conscious society. The country's environmental problems are rooted in the inhuman apartheid system and the misguided economic policies which propped up that system for more than 50 years. A democratic government will have to deal with those consequences for generations to come.

The linkages between environmental degradation and the socio-economic crisis within the country parallel the patterns found globally. The coexistence of the patterns of Northern overconsumption and pollution and Southern poverty and degradation, together with racial divisions, are causing major political and social instability. The ANC is firmly committed to the principle of sustainable development, and recently adopted a policy framework reaffirming the right of all citizens of South Africa to a safe and healthy environment and to a life of well-being.

The ANC is gravely concerned about the violence associated with the current transition in South Africa. Its hope for a speedy installation of an interim government has been dashed with the breakdown of talks at the Convention for a Democratic South Africa.

All nations should assist South Africans by supporting a speedy resolution of the transition. They should not rush into hasty and unsustainable investments which give succour and recognition to the existing regime. They and international institutions should adopt policies of sustainable development in dealing with a new South Africa.

SANTOS ROHENA, Secretary of Natural Resources of Puerto Rico: Modern industrial development required alterations in living systems. Thus, all those interested in development must also bé interested in the environment. In order to achieve a high standard of living, it is absolutely necessary to maintain the environment in optimum condition. For this reason, the

environmental variable must receive the highest possible consideration.

Natural resources have become a priority, an issue of high politics in international affairs. Puerto Rico's Constitution calls upon the Commonwealth to ensure conservation and the best development of its resources. Governmental actions are designed to achieve these goals. Development must be achieved while protecting natural resources.

Thus, Puerto Rico has not fallen behind in environmental efforts, but rather has participated in international and regional efforts to preserve the environment, in such areas as protection of coastal zones and marine life. The concern for the environment -- in issues such as climate change, the "greenhouse effect" and biolcgical diversity -- transcends national boundaries and geographical limits.

Individual behaviour will also have to be modified. For this reason, Puerto Rico will present for plenary consideration an "Environmental Charter of Duties and Rights of a Citizen of the Earth", for use as a guide to behaviour. In this way, each and every human being will understand his responsibility for protecting nature.

H.O.A. KJELDSEN, of the International Federation of Agricultural Producers (IFAP): The IFAP represents 500 million farmers world-wide. More than any other profession, farming takes place in close contact with the environment and provides a livelihood and survival for millions of people, often the poorest and most marginalized. The fundamental role played by farmers in managing the planet's natural resources has not been fully recognized.

It is only through consultation with farmers, through their organizations, that an appropriate policy framework, necessary to achieve sustainable agricultural development, can be created and farmers' real needs fully addressed. Only an economically viable agriculture is capable of achieving the objectives of environmental sustainability. For this, farmers need fair prices for their products, fair trading conditions, a sound infrastructure and secure land tenure.

The IFAP farmers have committed themselves to the pursuit of sustainable agricultural development, to the health of the physical environment and to a dynamic future for rural areas. The adoption of sustainable farming practices cannot be successfully imposed from above. The IFAP believes in a farmer-centred approach to sustainable agricultural development, an approach which regards farmers as the key to the solution, not part of the problem. Active farmer participation is essential.

Right of Reply

The representative of Yugoslavia, speaking in exercise of his right of reply: For the second time, issues have been raised that are outside the scope of this Conference. An analysis had been made of environmental problems by the representative of Croatia, which he agreed with. However, his interpretation of the origin of the civil war is unacceptable, as is his qualification of Serbia and Montenegro as the aggressor.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

ENV/DEV/145
11 June 1992

MAIN COMMITTEE OF ENVIRONMENT/DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE CONCLUDES WORK

To Transmit, to Ministerial-Level Plenary Meeting, Non-Agreed Texts On Financial Resources, Mechanisms, Global Consensus Principles on Forests

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 11 June -- The Main Committee of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) completed its work early this morning after approving the chapter on financial resources and mechanisms, contained in "Agenda 21", the global plan of action.

The Committee also decided to transmit to the Conference plenary, for further consideration at the ministerial level, the non-agreed texts contained in that chapter.

In addition, the Committee approved a three-point "package deal" proposed by the Chairman, Tommy Koh (Singapore), by which: (1) the text of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development remains as approved in New York; (2) the preamble to Agenda 21 is amended to state that the programme of action would be carried out in full respect of all the principles contained in the Rio Declaration; and (3) the expression "people under occupation" is deleted from the text of Agenda 21.

(Principle 23 of the Rio Declaration now states that the environment and natural resources of people under oppression, domination and occupation shall be protected.)

Following a proposal by Chairman Koh, the Committee recommended that the Conference request the United Nations General Assembly, at its next regular session beginning in September, to establish an intergovernmental negotiating committee to elaborate an international convention to combat desertification and/or drought, particularly in Africa, with a view to completing such a convention by June 1994. The representative of Nigeria, speaking on behalf of the African Group, said there was not one continent, except Europe, which did not suffer from desertification. He added that a convention addressing that problem would be of benefit to all.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

In another action, the Committee decided to recommend to the Conference that in order to ensure an effective follow-up of UNCED, a high-level commission on sustainable development be established. It would report to the General Assembly through the United Nations Economic and Social Council. Such a commission would consider information provided by Governments regarding implementation of Agenda 21, as well as problems faced in their efforts to achieve sustainable development such as those relating to financial resources and technology transfer.

Also transmitted to the plenary for further deliberation was the still heavily bracketed text of the statement of principles for a global consensus on the management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests; and two chapters of Agenda 21, one of which contains a bracketed reference to negotiating an international legal instrument on forests, and the other relates to the protection of the atmosphere in which all references to "safe" technology are surrounded by brackets.

At the outset of the meeting, which was convened at 3 p.m. on Wednesday and adjourned at 6 a.m. today, the Chairman said the time for settlement and resolution had come. He added: "We must not let this Conference fail. Whatever remains unresolved will be transmitted to the plenary to be resolved by our ministers."

There are three outstanding issues in the chapter on financial resources and mechanisms. The first is in the section on basis for action, which states that the implementation of the huge sustainable development programmes of Agenda 21 will require the provision to developing countries of substantial new and additional financial resources, "including resources on a grant or concessional basis". The terms of lending is one of the issues referred to the plenary.

The approved language states that in light of the global benefits to be realized by the implementation of Agenda 21, the provision of effective means, such as financial resources and technology, will serve the interests of developed and developing countries. The chapter says: "The cost of inaction could outweigh the financial costs of implementing Agenda 21. Inaction will narrow the choices of future generations."

Another set of brackets is contained in the section on means of implementation. The chapter recognizes that for developing countries, particularly the least developed ones, official development assistance (ODA) is a main source of new and additional funding for sustainable development. The brackets refer to the target date for developed countries to reach the accepted United Nations objective of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) for ODA. The options are "the year 2000"; "as soon as possible"; and "by the year 2000 or as soon as possible thereafter".

A third contentious issue is the question of the replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's arm for concessional lending, for which two options are offered: the IDA should be

replenished with a substantial "earth increment" in addition to the volume of resources needed to maintain its funding level in real terms; or it should consider a special "earth increment" to its tenth replenishment.

Brackets are also to be found in the text on the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and its restructuring. Non-agreed text refers, among other things, to ensuring a governance that is "transparent and democratic in nature, including in terms of decision-making and operations"; "ensuring new and additional financial resources on grant and concessional terms, particularly to developing countries"; "ensuring predictability in the flow of funds by contributions from developed countries"; and the question of access and disbursement of the funds "without imposing conditionality".

Among other texts approved at the all-night meeting was a paragraph in the chapter on hazardous wastes, stating that Governments should ascertain that their military establishments conform to their nationally applicable environmental norms in the treatment and disposal of those wastes.

The Committee also approved a Chairman's proposal for a new preambular paragraph to UNCED's programme of action. It states, in part, that the developmental and environmental objectives of Agenda 21 will require a substantial flow of new and additional financial resources to developing countries in order to cover the incremental costs for the actions they have to undertake to deal with global environmental problems and to accelerate sustainable development.

Introducing the new text, Chairman Koh said it aimed at ensuring that developing countries "enjoyed the absolute priority" in the flow of financial resources required to implement the programme of action.

Other chapters of Agenda 21 approved after protracted negotiations concern freshwater resources, biological diversity, biotechnology, and transfer of environmentally safe and sound technology, although in this last chapter, all references to "safe" remain in brackets, pending action on a generic solution to deal with that issue throughout Agenda 21.

This chapter states that environmentally "safe and sound" technologies (the words "safe and" are in brackets) protect the environment, are less polluting, use all resources in a more sustainable manner, recycle more of their wastes and products, and handle residual wastes in a more acceptable manner than the technologies for which they were substitutes. It calls for promoting and financing the access to and transfer of such technologies, particularly to developing countries, on favourable terms, including concessional and preferential terms, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights as well as the special needs of developing countries for implementation of Agenda 21.

Also approved by the Committee was the chapter on international legal instruments and mechanisms, which deals, among other things, with the question of "avoidance of disputes" in the field of sustainable development and of trade and the environment. It contains wording according to which States recognize that environmental policies should deal with the root causes of environmental degradation, thus preventing environmental measures from resulting in unnecessary restrictions to trade.

In a concluding statement, Nitin Desai, Deputy Secretary-General of UNCED, expressed a deep sense of gratitude to the Chairman, Mr. Koh, "for having steered us on the road to Rio". Mr. Koh received a two-minute standing ovation from Committee members.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

ENV/DEV/146
11 June 1992

CONFERENCE HEARS 14 SPEAKERS IN CONTINUING GENERAL DEBATE;

ACCEPTS CREDENTIALS OF 95 PARTICIPATING STATES

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 11 June -- The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development this morning heard 14 more speakers in its continuing general debate.

The Conference also adopted a resolution recommended by its Credentials Committee in which it accepted the credentials of 95 States participating in the Conference.

In adopting the resolution approving the Credential Committee's report, the Conference also took into account the United States reservation that it did not believe the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia still existed, and did not consider Serbia-Montenegro to be the continuation of, or sole successor to, Yugoslavia.

Taking part in the general debate were the Minister for Environment of the Republic of Korea; the Minister for Environment, Economic Planning and External Relations of Seychelles; the Minister for Environment of Canada; the Minister for Environment of New Zealand; the Minister for Environmental Protection of Ukraine; and the Vice-Minister for Environment of Nicaragua.

The United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development addressed the Conference, as did the Secretary-General of the World Meteorological Organization, the Director-General of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and the Secretary-General of the Organization of American States.

Also making statements were: the observer for Palestine; the representative of the King of Bhutan; a representative of the Canadian Youth Organization and the Director-General for Technical Cooperation and Economic Development of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation.

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Statements on Credentials

The representative of Portugal, speaking on behalf of the 12-member European Community: The Community has taken note of the declarations of 27 April by the Republic of Serbia and the Republic of Montenegro which states that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is a continuation of the old State of Yugoslavia. These declarations raise the question of the continuity of Yugoslav membership in international organizations. The European Community has not accepted the automatic continuity of Yugoslavia and reserves its position on the question.

The representative of Yugoslavia: It is unfortunate that the question of Yugoslav participation has been raised. The Rio Conference is not the time or place to discuss the matter. The Secretary-General of the United Nations was officially informed on 27 April that the Assembly of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia had promulgated a constitution, in which it indicated it would take upon itself all the responsibilities of the former Socialist Republic of Yugoslavia, including its membership in all international organizations. Thus, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is not a new state, but a continuation of the old State of Yugoslavia. At this point, raising a question on participation is unacceptable.

Statements in General Debate

JI CHAOZHU, Under-Secretary-General, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Development: The Department brings together system-wide coordination and direction in the economic and social sectors with research and policy analysis and support to concrete technical cooperation programmes and activities. The concept of sustainable development provides the unifying theme for the Department and for integrating environmental policies and development strategies. Development policy formulation is the key mechanism for ensuring the incorporation of environmental concerns at the national level. It is also essential in coordinating sectoral programmes and policies which in their turn must include environmental components and be in harmony with national environment and development objectives.

Effective policy formulation and implementation is dependent, in turn, on a sound base of environmental information, statistics and data, derived from environmental monitoring, assessment and report. The Department has multi-disciplinary capabilities in fields such as indicative planning, policy assessment and advice, advanced technology assessment systems, including remote sensing and geographical information systems which are important aspects of environmental monitoring. Integration of population and environmental policies, public management and entrepreneurship are key areas of concern. Integrated management of water resources and shared water courses, desertification, solid waste management and environmentally sound mining techniques also make up an important part of the programme.

FAROUK KADDOUMI, Observer for Palestine: The prolonged Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories is a major obstacle to sustainable development, because the occupying Power exercises forceful control over the

natural resources. Several United Nations resolutions clearly assert the Palestinian's right to control and manage their land and resources. Israel's practices are, therefore, completely illegal.

Israel has confiscated about 60 per cent of Palestinian-owned land in the West Bank and 40 per cent in the Gaza Strip. Despite United Nations Security Council resolutions, 250 settlements have been built and Israel's plans to construct a new road network to connect the settlements with Israel will require the confiscation of an additional 7,000 hectares. Intensified settlement building has led to problems in the diminution of available land, overcrowding, destruction of the vegetative cover, a reduction in the area of cultivated and grazing land, a reduction of available water resources, the intensified use of herbicides and spreading desertification. In addition, Israel controls about 80 per cent of renewable water resources in the occupied territories. One source of fresh water, the Jordan River, has been left, through overuse and contamination, little better than a sewage ditch.

The Palestinian people believe that Principle 23 of the Rio Declaration clearly refers to the need to provide protection to the environment and natural resources of people under oppression. It is high time for the world community to realize that occupation contradicts the principles of life, sound environment and freedom.

E-HYOCK KWON, Minister for Environment of the Republic of Korea: A new international regime for the protection of the global environment should be established -- not an irrational regime established on the claims of a few countries, or an inequitable one that has some countries pursuing their interests based on other countries' sacrifice. The global environment cannot be protected unless each country is willing to sacrifice its economic profits in the short term.

The Government has targeted the "harmony between economic prosperity and environmental protection" as the country's main policy objective, and has implemented the legal and institutional measures to realize it. It also intends to participate actively in global environment conservation activities and, with the cooperation of the world community, will endeavour to realize the Rio Declaration and "Agenda 21". The concept of sustainable development should not place a constraint on the development needs of developing countries, but should enable them not to repeat the developed countries' experience of degrading the environment.

The financial resources for the global environment should be shared primarily on the basis of historical and accumulated responsibility for global environmental degradation of each country. There is a need to establish an international mechanism to improve technology transfer with appropriate compensation for the intellectual property rights. Respecting the system of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to improve international free trade, the Republic of Korea opposes the misuse of environmental regulation to impose either arbitrary trade barriers or trade pressure.

DANIELLE DE ST.-JORRE, Minister for Environment, Economic Planning and External Relations of the Seychelles: The hopes expressed for the Rio Conference reflect an extraordinary situation. Very rarely have the chips been so far down on the environment, yet never has the urgency for reaction ever been perceived with such unanimity. It will no longer be possible to have a good conscience cheaply. This is understood by everyone and is, perhaps, the new element in the debate.

The Seychelles does not have the capacity to negotiate options of an international nature and it must operate under the auspices of the United Nations for global consensus. Yet, even while doing that, it must be clear that without a real redistribution in favour of the poorer countries, nothing will change in the present, and long-term strategies will not be reformulated. Policies for the integration of development and environment require specific budgetary packages. Who will decide upon these funds?

The whole world has suffered from the industrial model. Is it not logical that those same industrial countries should present the world with alternatives? The poor countries, on whom those models are often imposed, cannot be expected to master on their own the means necessary for any marked improvement in their standard of living. The poorer countries cannot proceed on simple encouragement and advice. As has been the experience in the Seychelles, good intentions are rarely translated into action. The Seychelles will continue to preserve its own ecosystem and the species found there. It expects, in return, that its hope for the future will not be betrayed.

G.O.P. OBASI, Secretary-General, World Meteorological Organization (WMO): The WMO has been instrumental in identifying environmental crises and in providing information needed to respond to them. Following the present Conference, national studies must be carried out to determine baseline statistics on national capacities. For farming, that means an analysis of national capacities for agro-forestry related to soil types, length of growing season, amount of sunshine, temperature regimes and precipitation characteristics. With the advent of satellites and computers, understanding of the global climate system has dramatically increased. None the less, new types of information and more research are needed to answer questions about the timing, magnitude and regional pattern of expected climate change.

The WMO intends to remain a leader in the field of climate monitoring. In order to combine science with policy decisions, WMO is willing to consider hosting the secretariat to the Framework Convention on Climate Change. In the coming years, WMO will reach out to groups both within and outside the United Nations system in order to respond better to the demands of achieving the environmental revolution. This will require new ways of thinking and acting.

The organization is prepared to respond quickly to the needs identified in Agenda 21. While it is capable of fine-tuning its existing programmes to meet the specific proposals of Agenda 21, these programmes must be substantially strengthened. The gaps in the global observing systems must be reduced if not eliminated.

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ARTHUR DUNKEL, Director-General, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT): Trade is an engine for growth, development and job creation. The Uruguay Round negotiations hold the promise of significant contributions through increasing market access, reducing tariff escalation and non-tariff barriers, cutting agricultural trade barriers and reducing agricultural export subsidies, and strengthening the rules and disciplines of the trading systems so that they can better protect and promote the trade interests of all participants. Governments must now find the courage to make the final political compromises.

The GATT Contracting Parties have already begun addressing the links between trade and environment through the work programme agreed for their Group on Environmental Measures and International Trade. Trade and the trading system have to be seen from the macroeconomic point of view, in terms of generation and mobilizing, through enhanced international trade, the financial and technological resources needed to implement adequate environmental policies; and from the microeconomic point of view, in terms of avoiding ill-considered specific actions involving trade restrictions which would be costly in terms of disruptions to international commerce without necessarily helping to solve environmental problems.

Trade policy cuts across many of the sectoral issues being considered at the Conference. In an increasingly interdependent world, economic and trade policies need to address more deeply than ever all the factors which determine the conditions of competition. The Uruguay Round's environmental policies and the instruments used to implement them pervade the work in many respects.

JEAN CHAREST, Minister for Environment of Canada: The foundation of Canada's "Green Plan", established in 1990 as an action plan for sustainable development, has been transparency, accountability and inclusion. Sustainable development requires fundamental change and that change must occur throughout society and be generated in a way that respects the needs and abilities of all. The Government has asked all sectors of Canadian society to request help. The response exceeded expectations. For success, decision-making must be transparent; accountability for solutions must be clear; and the process must include all sectors of society.

The environmental consequences of governmental initiatives will be presented to the public in Canada. Procedures for environmental assessment are being upgraded and made into law. Government operations will be conducted according to a new environmental code. A new Cabinet Committee has been formed to oversee the changes. The Green Plan details targets and schedules for national policy regarding the emission of greenhouse gases, the manufacture of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), the emission of sulfur dioxide and the reduction of waste. Such an approach clearly establishes the rules and draws on the ingenuity of people, institutions and markets.

The marketplace has gone green because of consumer demand. Companies are now economically and environmentally competitive. Progressive companies are important agents in the transfer of technology and capital investment. Canada

has encouraged aboriginal people to record their knowledge and recognizes that self-government and a secure land-base are essential elements in their continued development. The Green Plan will incorporate the new standards set by the Conference.

ROB STOREY, Minister for the Environment of New Zealand: New Zealand is becoming all too aware of its vulnerability to global environmental threats not of its making and empathizes with its South Pacific neighbours. They have contributed least to global warming, yet they are most at risk from rising sea levels. Another real threat is the degradation caused by overexploitation of resources and the imbalance of wealth and poverty between nations. It is a savage irony that, in a world beset by malnutrition, agricultural subsidies in the developed world, which amount to $300 billion each year -- six times the amount spent on development assistance -- still produce unwanted mountains of food. This is a tragic example, on a global scale, of the failure to link environment, economics and social justice.

New Zealand is committed to the need for new and additional financial resources to help developing countries move towards sustainable development. Yet, while this assistance is necessary, it is no substitute for developing countries having access and a fair price for their products in international trade. New Zealand is also committed to action on climate change, biodiversity and marine resources, in particular the sustainable management of fisheries, and implementation of Agenda 21.

During the last decade, all direct agricultural subsidies have been removed in New Zealand, since experience has demonstrated the distorting effects of such subsidies and their adverse environmental effects.

Princess SONAM CHHODEN WANGCHUCK, representative of the King of Bhutan: In considering the relationship between environment and development, special attention must be given to population, the greatest threat to the environment being people and their increasing demands, as well as to social and cultural needs which, in the final analysis, are the main contributing factors to the quality of human life.

The Rio Declaration and Agenda 21 provide the necessary framework for national and international action. The Agenda is an integrated programme and cannot be selectively applied or implemented. The costs involved are necessary investments for a common future. The costs of conserving developing countries' rich natural resources must be adequately supported through innovative and open financial mechanisms.

Bhutan's traditional reverence for nature has delivered it into this decade with its environment still largely intact, and it is determined to pass on this rich heritage to future generations. In formulating socio-economic plans, population and preservation of the environment are given special consideration.

The country's plans and actions are guided by well-defined national policies and priorities, based on a sustainable development strategy. Recognition of the role of women, particularly rural women, in sustainable development is crucial, and their role in leadership and community-based participation must be vital components of sustainable development strategies.

JOAO CLEMENTE BAENA SOARES, Secretary-General of the Organization of American States (OAS): Efforts to improve environmental quality world-wide and to strengthen democracy go hand in hand with the search for a solution to the problems of poverty. Since its creation, the OAS has conceived of development as an integral process, centred on the human being, and that concept includes the environmental aspects of development. Its cooperation programmes have for decades supported policies espousing environmental improvement.

At a time when the Americas are witnessing greater economic openness and increasing concern for the environment, the link between foreign trade and environmental matters deserves special attention and analysis. Regional action can complement national initiatives in the areas of generation of and access to clean and efficient technologies; the link between international trade and the environment; identifying ways to eliminate the adverse environmental impact of drug trafficking; the progressive codification of environmental law in the Inter-American Juridical Committee; and technical support to OAS members on matters of sustainable development.

Regional organizations have a key role to play in achieving the global goals pursued in today's different world. The OAS hopes UNCED will produce initiatives which will strengthen the organization's activities; that it will represent a balance between the numerous and contradictory aspects of the environmental issue; that a preoccupation with preserving tropical rain forests will not lead people to forget about the revitalization of cities and improvement of urban living; and that preoccupation with the future will not deter people from organizing the present more capably.

YURI SCHERBAK, Minister for Environmental Protection of Ukraine: Chernobyl represented a qualitatively new type of ecological disaster resulting from an excessive concentration of nuclear power in flawed reactors. Such a catastrophe does not recognize borders. It excludes the possibility of stable development for society. Chernobyl was only one kind of environmental problem confronting Ukraine. From the old regime, it inherited an outmoded ecologically polluted industry, exhausted natural resources and serious environmental deterioration.

As a country subject to ecological crisis, Ukraine welcomes the Conference. In the years to come, mankind will fully grasp what was being accomplished here. Ukraine is ready to sign the fundamental documents of UNCED, which, although they fall short of perfection, are an important step forward to an era of stable development and ecolological understanding.

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The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) does not fully take into account the situation of the Eastern European countries. Ukraine favours the establishment of a European environmental agency that would consider the concerns of countries in transition to a market economy; clear and legal documents on ecological crimes, monitoring and on-site inspections; a discussion on the ecology of disarmament; shared responsibility of all States for environmental protection with each State bearing responsibility for its own environmentally rational socio-economic development; and the establishment of regional and global networks of data banks. Ukraine is concerned about the implementation of concrete programmes regarding the United Nations plan on Chernobyl.

WAGAKI MWANGI, of the Canadian Youth Organization: The UNCED is the most democratic process of the United Nations, having involved everyone in the process, including youth. In order for any system to succeed, there must be popular participation and democracy.

Youth, who account for two thirds of the world's population, have been given only 22 minutes throughout the UNCED process to make their views known. While attending elaborate cocktails, few delegates realize how critical their decisions are for youth. This generation of youth is damned with a heritage in which human beings will remain subject to fellow human beings, and where disease is the order of the day. Of the more than 100 Heads of State at UNCED, not one will speak out on behalf of youth.

The ambiguous language contained in Agenda 21 is not the language of the twenty-first century but of the twentieth. Youth feel betrayed by Governments in which they had much faith. Youth believe UNCED will have failed to safeguard their future unless it adopts the 10-point statement approved by non-governmental organizations.

At this moment, several youths are fasting in the main hall to demonstrate their commitment to a common cause, and their numbers world-wide are growing. The fast will continue until UNCED takes action. The UNCED process is jeopardized by those who act in their own interests. Youth do not want an unjust world; they want an equitable future -- the least they expect from the Conference.

PATRICIO JEREZ, Vice-Minister for Environment of Nicaragua: Nicaragua, throughout its history, has known first hand how harsh nature can be, facing earthquakes, hurricanes and war. Yet, it is now embarked on a process of building sustainable development and social justice. Reclaiming the environment is no mere philosophical position for Nicaragua. It is the only viable approach to uprooting poverty.

The main environmental problems faced by Nicaragua are: deforestation; inappropriate land use; pollution of water resources; and the lack of environmental education, in addition to the impact of poverty. In addressing these problems, the new democratic Government, which inherited the worst financial crisis in Nicaraguan history, has developed a strategy of sustainable development.

Just 10 days ago, the Presidents of the Central American countries signed the Managua Covenant for the Preservation of Central American Biodiversity, which emphasizes the importance those Governments have placed on the protection of ecosystems. In the next few days, those same Presidents will sign the international Conventions in Rio. In the coming months, environmental standards on the control of toxic wastes will be established, as called for in the Managua Covenant. All of these steps complement one another. For its part, Nicaragua is an ecological bridge between North and South and must be preserved. The accords resulting from Rio are, at this time, the most viable way forward to establishing new norms of behaviour and a new philosophy that will recognize global responsibilities.

JEAN-MARC DE COMARMOND, Director-General for Technical Cooperation and Economic Development of the Agency for Cultural and Technical Cooperation: The Agency is an intergovernmental organization comprising 43 francophone countries. In Dakar, in 1989, a summit meeting of Heads of State laid the foundation for interregional cooperation to promote sustainable development, and affirmed the urgent and global need for solutions to environmental problems.

Convinced that the degradation of the environment is linked to the deterioration in terms of trade and that demographic pressure is both the cause and result of poverty, and conscious of the constraints of indebtedness on development, francophone countries have committed themselves to mobilize additional financial resources to confront the global threats to the environment and development and to cooperate in the transfer of environmentally sound technology.

The Tunis Plan of Action, adopted in 1991, has done much to strengthen dialogue within the francophone community. That dialogue has led to a consensus on various issues before UNCED, such as a support for the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity, and the need to elaborate an international convention to deal with the crucial problem of desertification. There is also a need to strengthen and coordinate the structures of the United Nations and to create a commission on sustainable development, under a revitalized Economic and Social Council. The implementation of Agenda 21 will require the mobilization of additional resources, the creation of appropriate financial mechanisms and strengthened and dynamic technical cooperation.

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United Nations

Press Release

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UNITED NATIONS ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT CONCLUDES GENERAL DEBATE WITH 22 STATEMENTS

(Received from a UN Information Officer.)

RIO DE JANEIRO, 11 June -- The United Nations Conference on Environment and Development concluded this afternoon its general debate, with 22 statements made.

During its six days of debate, extending over 11 meetings, the Conference heard statements by 135 nations, 13 United Nations specialized agencies, 23 intergovernmental organizations, 16 non-governmental organizations, 13 United Nations organs and four observer delegations -- a total of 204 speakers.

The speakers at this afternoon's concluding debate were the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru; the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Comoros; the Foreign Ministers of Suriname and Lebanon; the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock of El Salvador and President of the Central American Commission on Environment and Development; the Minister for Environment and Parliamentary Affairs of Sri Lanka; the Minister of State for Environment of Fiji; the Minister of Agriculture, Water and Forests, Animal Husbandry and Environment of the Congo; and the Ministers for the Environment of Honduras and of Singapore.

Also speaking were the Minister for Justice, Acting Minister for Public Health and President of the Permanent Committee for Environmental Protection of Qatar; the Minister and President of the Federal Committee for Environment of Czechoslovakia; the Minister of Planning and Development of Trinidad and Tobago; the Vice-Prime Minister of the Council of Ministers of Viet Nam; the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources of Venezuela; and the Deputy Foreign Minister of Afghanistan and Economic Adviser to the Head of State.

Statements were also made by the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Secretariat; the Registrar of the International Court of Justice; the Director of the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office; the Director-General of the

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International Union for the Conservation of Nature; a representative of the Greenbelt Movement for UNCED '92 and a member of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

After the conclusion of the general debate, four children addressed the Plenary "on behalf of future generations".

At the close of the meeting, the ex-officio Vice-President, Celso Lafer, Minister for External Relations of Brazil, told the Conference that he had been informed by the Chairman of the Main Committee, Tommy T.B. Koh (Singapore), that there were three areas in which some work was still necessary -- finance, atmosphere and forests. He called for continued consultations on these issues and said he would call for a meeting of the General Committee from 12 noon to 1 p.m. tomorrow, at the ministerial level, with the participation of the officers of the Main Committee.

He said he would also call for a meeting of the plenary at 11 p.m. tomorrow to examine and consider outstanding matters, in order to prepare for the adoption of agreements on environment and development.

The Conference will hold the first meeting of its summit segment beginning at 9 a.m. tomorrow, 12 June, with 28 Heads of State and Government scheduled to speak.

Statements in General Debate

SAID HASSAN SAID HACHIM, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Comoros: Comoros is one of those most seriously affected by environmental pollution. The archipelago has great beauty, yet it is threatened with devastation and is linked to poverty, overuse of the land and a population explosion. Faced with such serious problems, all measures helping to stop this vicious circle will be supported. Comoros is poor among the poorest, unfairly penalized in the world trade in commodities. Still, it is trying to protect the environment through a regional organization trying to protect the Indian Ocean. In this undertaking, the members of the Commission on the Indian Ocean have to work together but, at the same time, help from others is necessary. All of the oil tankers that served Europe pass through the Indian Ocean and there is a danger of irreparable damage from oil spills.

There are many non-governmental organizations that deserve attention. In the 1960s, young people in the United States rebelled. They faced the danger of their time, the very same problems the world is faced with today. Many elders were contemptuous of them at that time, yet they were talking about beauty and nature and were opposed to the destruction by weapons and war. Unfortunately, it is true that people seldom listen to their own prophets.

OSCAR DE LA PUENTE RAYGADA, Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Peru: Peru is deeply involved in the process to find solutions to global environmental problems and fully adheres to any measure that can contribute to sustainable development. Its ethno-cultural and biological diversity has a planetary dimension and the problems associated with it must

be responsibly addressed by the industrialized countries. Peru has adopted measures to promote the appropriate handling and management of the diverse ecosystems in the country, most notably those in the Amazon region, and is providing incentives for foreign investment in the country under conditions that support sustainable development and respect the sovereign right of Peru over its natural resources.

Peru has actively participated in the negotiations that resulted in the Conventions on Climate Change and Biodiversity. The President of Peru will sign them tomorrow. The consensus on the Rio Declaration manifests the wish of the international community to design a political framework to improve on the Stockholm Declaration. Technology transfer and the availability of financial resources are fundamental elements in achieving the success of "Agenda 21". New and additional resources are vital. The offers by some countries to increase their contributions deserve special recognition.

Peru, limited in its resources by a combination of economic, social and political factors, has decided to confront its dramatic situation at the cost of temporarily suspending the present regime. A quick return to an institutional legitimacy will enable it to respond to the large number of Peruvians who support the search for an efficient government that will permit the establishment of mechanisms for sustainable development.

SUBHAS MUNGRA, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Suriname: The implementation of Agenda 21 will be the basis for a new global partnership. It could set the course for an era of development that is both secure and sustainable for future generations. The availability of financial resources will be crucial. Solving financial problems is an important aspect for the overall success of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

The international community will either cooperates in mitigating the effects of environmental degradation or become the victim of destructive processes that will eventually lead the world into chaos. It is obvious that the countries with a major share in causing global environmental damage should act according to their responsibility. Unfortunately, only in the case of the Rio Declaration have the developed countries demonstrated a spirit of compromise and understanding. On essential issues -- such as financial resources and the transfer of technology -- there are many disagreements. If a global partnership is to be formed, a mutually agreeable solution must be found.

Suriname has a tradition of dealing with its natural environment in a responsible manner. Almost 90 per cent of the country is covered with tropical vegetation, from dense rainforest to savannah. Those natural resources are vital for the country's future development. A substantial number of ecosystems are protected, a silvicultural system that can manage tropical forests sustainably has been developed and progress is being made in research on monitoring forest resources.

EMEKA ANYAOKU, Secretary-General, Commonwealth Secretariat: The Rio Conference is a challenge to leaders and to all involved to demonstrate their common humanity, accept the practical obligations arising from that recognition and, having accepted them, act willingly and expeditiously. The cause in Rio is nothing less than the survival of the planet. There is no environmental "strategic defence initiative" that can shield any nation from the harmful consequences of climate change, poisoned seas or accelerated loss of natural species.

The Conference also challenges all countries, especially the seven industrial countries, to contribute enough to make a real impact on poverty and sustainable development. A firm commitment to increased financing is called for, as is a commitment to trade liberalization and external debt policies that will assist developing countries in tackling poverty. These objectives deserve the fullest support now and determined follow-up after the Conference.

The Commonwealth can offer the world community a practice of overcoming differences and enunciating a collective wisdom. In 1989, Commonwealth Heads of Government, in the Langkawi Declaration, embraced the principles of sustainable development. Recent reports on environmental issues by Commonwealth experts have made a significant contribution to the concerns of the Conference. Further, Guyana -- the only Commonwealth country in the Amazon region -- and the Commonwealth Secretariat are collaborating on the Iwokrama Rainforest Programme, a far-sighted experiment that aims to demonstrate methods of utilizing tropical forests on a sustainable basis.

MIGUEL EDUARDO ARAUJO PADILLA, General Secretary of the National Council for the Environment of El Salvador: The environment can play a key role in the process of national reconstruction and reconciliation. Peace will facilitate environmental work in all parts of the country. The environmental crisis unites Salvadorans because of its severity and the fact that it affects all without distinction.

El Salvador has only 2 per cent of its original forest; more than 90 per cent of its rivers are contaminated; more than two thirds of its soils suffer from severe erosion; and it has a population density of more than 250 inhabitants per square kilometre. Yet, it has a biodiversity similar to that of the United States. Two centuries of social and governmental neglect, combined with economic development that indiscriminately mined its resources, confront the country with a new war that is more cruel because as time passes, the possibilities of solution disappear.

The Salvadoran Government has taken strategic measures to tackle the environmental crisis, including the inauguration of the National Council for the Environment, environmental units in several branches of government and the preparation of an Environmental Agenda and Action Plan. Important contributions have been made by non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the labour union movement. A regional approach to environmental

problems will result in a more effective environmental management and could provide a greater contribution to the solution of global environmental problems.

EDUARDO VALENCIA-OSPINA, Registrar of the International Court of Justice, on behalf of the President of the Court: The dangers to the environment are global and therefore international in character, and the legal answers have to be international too, with generally applicable principles and rules. It is impossible to seek solutions only in terms of the environment. Inextricably involved are questions of development law, poverty, the distribution of raw materials and other resources, international finance and the transfer of technologies.

New international law for the protection of the environment needs urgently to be developed. Existing laws are inadequately developed or elaborated to cope with present problems. The International Court plays a dual role in the settlement of disputes and in the development and elaboration of general law. It has a very important function to perform in obtaining a better law of the environment. There is no legal question or problem concerning the environment over which the Court does not have full jurisdiction and competence.

The 15-member Court represents the different forms of civilization and different legal systems, and on the question of the environment, there are great differences between the interests and points of view of the developed and developing nations. The Court has evolved techniques and procedures whereby a legal decision which comprises these two sources can be forged. The Court should be at the centre of the environment question.

M. VINCENT PERERA, Minister for Environment and Parliamentary Affairs of Sri Lanka: Sri Lanka has addressed environmental issues through a series of initiatives aimed at protecting, preserving and improving the environment for the benefit of the community. Because it permeates all sectors of development, the Government has established a mechanism to ensure that the environment is safeguarded during the implementation of development projects.

Lack of adequate financial resources is the most serious constraint facing the Government in addressing major socio-economic problems. The loss of skilled manpower to the developed countries severely impairs the country's economic development efforts. Sri Lanka recognizes that it must speed up the development process to combat poverty while ensuring that the development process is environmentally sound and sustainable.

Agenda 21 covers the spectrum of environment and development issues which must be addressed if unsustainable patterns of development are to be corrected. The resources required will have to come from substantial increases in official development assistance (ODA), along with other measures. In short, the international economic order has to be restructured to enable developing countries to generate more financial resources through their own efforts.

Sri Lanka's contribution to global warming is minuscule, but the effect of a possible rise in sea level could be extremely damaging because of the location of many infrastructures close to the coastline. Therefore, the Climate Change Convention, as well as the Convention on Biodiversity, will receive careful attention.

JOELI KALOU, Minister of State for Environment of Fiji: For a small island nation like Fiji, the Agenda 21 ocean programme is one of the most important areas negotiated. The UNCED has recognized the small island States as ecologically sensitive areas and has developed a special programme to address their sustainable development.

In UNCED, Fiji has supported principles on an effective regime to conserve and manage the living resources of the high seas. However, no agreement was reached in Agenda 21 on references to highly migratory species and straddling stocks. Fiji welcomes the agreement to hold an intergovernmental conference to deal with the issue.

The question of the illegal dumping of waste material also has not been adequately addressed by Agenda 21. With sanctions on dumping toxic and other wastes becoming much stronger in some places, the pressure on those areas which are difficult to police and which are insufficiently protected by international law and conventions will get stronger. Fiji is concerned that a substantial part of its low-lying coastal areas could be lost if the sea level rises as a result of climate change. Consequently, Fiji has fully participated in the development of the Climate Change Convention.

Environmental protection must be integrated with the process of economic growth. The immediate costs of doing so may be substantial, but the cost of inaction is greater.

DAMBERT RENE NDOUANE, Minister for Agriculture, Water and Forests, Animal Husbandry and Environment of the Congo: The problems facing the environment are major and disturbing. In the past, countries gave no consideration to the environmental effect of their developmental programmes. The Rio Summit is timely because countries can now go beyond the stage of promulgating principles and move to concrete action. The development of clean technology requires major efforts on the part of the industrial countries.

The developing countries do not have the needed resources to fully carry out environmentally sound and technologically clean sustainable development. Major restraints on the development of the poorest countries condemn them to use their natural resources as best they can. Forests are important sources of revenue for them and if they are expected to preserve them, then such preservation of the ecosystem has to be subject to compensation.

In its effort to combat environmental degradation, the Congo has established a Ministry for the Environment, implemented reforestation schemes and established protected areas in the country. Despite large forest areas, low population and a low level of industry, the Congo has not been spared. It will sign both of the Conventions before the Conference. To ensure their

implementation, the international community must be able to mobilize additional resources for Agenda 21. It must deal with market mechanisms and respect the principle of the "polluter-pays".

PETER BRANNER, Director, United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office: Drought is again threatening the lives of millions of Africans. Fortunately, there is a growing understanding that desertification is not just a question of sand-dunes moving or deserts advancing, but is rather the best example of the development/environment nexus. It is a process where the basic methods of survival have immediate impact on the environment and where the environment immediately impacts on the conditions of life, destroying the very basis of existence in some of the world's most fragile ecosystems.

Understanding, however, will not suffice if time and resources are lacking. Time is of the essence. The efforts that countries themselves have made deserve tribute. In approaching the issue in a more global and sustainable manner, countries are putting into place the framework for managing natural resources with the involvement of the entire population.

Furthermore, the agreement on preparing an international convention to combat desertification is significant. Such a convention can ensure that the attention of the international community is retained, that planning and programming activities are harmonized and that commitments are made on a long-term basis. Yet, while working towards a convention, substantial resources must be mobilized immediately in order to implement Agenda 21 programme areas.

FRANKLIN BERTRAND ANDURAY, Minister for Environment of Honduras: Rio demonstrates that there are still people in the world who believe in mankind's ability to confront the future. This quest simply aims at a better life. It does not matter that many were calling the 1980s the "lost decade". Rather, in Honduras, that decade made it clear that the mistakes of the past must be avoided, because those mistakes led to poverty and destruction of the true economic base -- natural resources.

Honduras is the second poorest country in Latin America and therefore has not, in the past, given much attention to environmental problems. None the less, the new Government has given great attention to the environment during the preparatory process for UNCED, and it understands that environmental problems do not lend themselves to isolated, short-term approaches.

A National Commission on the environment and development has been created to ensure coordination of efforts to improve the environment and the rational use of natural resources. Similarly, a national environmental strategy is being drafted. At the same time, Honduras requires the help of the developed countries, which must be given without strings or preconditions.

Without help, and given the financial problems it faces -- such as its mountain of debt -- Honduras could turn to its forest resources. If help is not given, it will have no choice, and in a generation Honduras will be a desert. Then, there will be another conference like this one, but it will be too late.

AHMED MATTAR, Minister for the Environment of Singapore: Sustainable development is the key to ensuring the well-being of the world's common future, the only way to attain the twin objectives of economic development and environmental protection. The two-year-old UNCED process has contributed to a dramatic increase in environmental awareness. Now, a unique opportunity exists to transform this awareness into action.

Singapore will be signing both the Climate Change and Biodiversity Conventions, which should provide a firm foundation for international action. Implementation of Agenda 21, however, depends upon a number of factors, the most important of which is the question of financial resources. Without adequate financial resources, it will be difficult for developing countries to implement Agenda 21. In that context, a supportive international economic environment would help the developing countries.

Developing countries need environmentally sound technology in order to achieve sustainable development. Many of the action programmes under Agenda 21 are technology-related and the process of technology transfer and sharing must be accelerated. Singapore was honoured to have been given a significant role in chairing the UNCED preparatory process and will continue to help in forging an international consensus on environment and development. Yet, Singapore also believes that the real solution to global environmental problems begins at home, and it started its own environmental effort some 30 years ago. Singapore aspires to be a "Green City" by the year 2000 and, to accomplish it, has produced a "Green Plan" to chart the direction of environmental policy over the next decade.

AHAMAD BIN SAIF AL-THANI, Minister of Justice, Acting Minister of Public Health and President of the Permanent Committee for Environmental Protection of Qatar: Qatar's development plan takes into account its arid environment and takes measures to preserve that environment and enhance its resources. It is also keen to protect its coasts and its pastures and to increase greenery in the country. It has tried to build an institutionalized infrastructure and to protect the Gulf seas. Like other countries it is faced with a new challenge of being at peace with nature.

Qatar has established preventive policies with measures that recognize the relationship between man and nature, increase public awareness so as to avoid damage to the environment and increase technical know-how to avoid technical problems. It also recognizes that the principle of sustainable development not only considers nature but ensures development that will be least harmful to nature. The strategy of coexistence between development and environment is part of the Islamic creed.

Qatar hopes the Conference will convince States to take multilateral actions in the context of the new world economic order, to look for solutions to build a just international order and guarantee cooperation between different States with different economic systems. Developing countries' efforts need more financial assistance on a concessional basis.

The Conference should consider the codification of environmental law and establish sanctions for environmental crimes. It hopes that measures with adverse effects on the national development plans and aspirations will not be adopted, especially an energy tax. It is important for the Conference to work to punish acts of deforestation, water pollution and oppression such as is practised in the occupied territories.

JOSEF VAVROUSEK, Minister for Environment of Czechoslovakia: The severe ecological problems of Europe cannot be solved by the isolated effort of a single country or groups of countries. Close pan-European cooperation is inevitable for the restoration of the environment. Environmental protection is probably the best framework for the future integration of the continent. If Europe is unable to solve cross-boundary environmental problems on the basis of rational negotiations, these time bombs could explode and even increase tensions.

A framework for a future environment programme for Europe has been established, and is oriented towards cleaning up the main rivers and polluted industrial areas, as well as preserving or revitalizing natural areas important for the ecological stability of the continent. A European environmental protection and restoration system must be set up, headed by a council of environmental ministers. This would considerably improve the coordination of European environmental efforts and increase efficiency.

The United Nations is a natural framework for effective international cooperation in the pursuit of sustainable development on a global scale. But because the world has changed much since 1945, it is time to reconstruct and revitalize the United Nations system, to adapt it to meet the new needs of sustainable development while preserving all its proven advantages.

A blueprint for a revitalized United Nations system could encompass a security system, an economic system, a social system and an environmental protection system as the four main institutional pillars; a second structure could be based on strengthening United Nations regional offices to enable them to handle all the important problems of the different continents or parts of them.

LENNY SAITH, Minister of Planning and Development of Trinidad and Tobago: Trinidad and Tobago, an island country of 1.23 million people, has been preoccupied for some time with many of the issues being debated in Rio. The UNCED provides an opportunity for reassessing its needs and developing strategies with fellow members of the global community for safeguarding a common future.

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New and additional financial resources are necessary to meet the challenge. Agenda 21 will remain unworkable without the financial support necessary for its implementation. In fact, success on resolving the financial resource issue has become a gauge for assessing commitment to the goals of Rio. Developed countries must take responsibility for the major areas of global degradation that have been caused by their style of industry and development. At the same time, the eligibility criteria for access to funds must also be addressed. The present gross national product (GNP) and gross domestic product (GDP) indicators, which would shut out some small island developing economies, should not be the sole factor in determining eligibility.

The implementation of the Framework Convention on Climate Change is imperative for small islands. The consequences of climate change pose an immediate and fundamental threat to Trinidad and Tobago's economy and ecosystems. Much of its unique land and marine biodiversity could be eliminated by a rise in sea level.

NGUYEN KHANH, Vice-Prime Minister, Council of Ministers of Viet Nam: The Conference has estimated that developing countries need $125 billion in additional assistance for their annual budgets and $600 billion from internal resources to implement Agenda 21. The amounts are large but insignificant in comparison with the thousands of billions of dollars expended annually on military spending. Viet Nam is a poor country which has suffered decades of war. Its industry has yet to take off, the average agricultural land per capita is low and natural calamities occur often. Industrial pollution is becoming a serious problem in industrial centres and populated areas.

Viet Nam, in an effort to resolve its environmental problems, has stepped up work on family planning and devotes a significant part of its budget to reforestation and to solving the difficult water problem in some areas. It also encourages agro-forestry models and the developing of sustainable agricultural models. The warming up of the atmosphere in recent decades has affected the country and there has been an expansion of dry and eroded areas. All of these have aggravated the existing difficulties of the country's socio-economic development.

In the immediate future, because of limited investment, the environment is in a serious situation. A great deal more will have to be done for sustainable development. In addition to mobilizing its own resources, Viet Nam needs assistance from the international community. To achieve the objectives of the Conference, there must be frank discussions, with good will, so as to promote better understanding and practical and effective action.

ENRIQUE COLMENARES FINOL, Minister for Environment and Natural Resources of Venezuela: After Rio, the world will not be the same. The task before the world community -- guaranteeing people's well-being, while sustaining natural resources -- implies a significant modification of people's behaviour, not only in social and economic activity, but in the organization of government.

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Venezuela recently submitted to its National Congress a restructuring of the public administration, proposing the creation of a new ministry of the environment and land-use planning. This new ministry will integrate environmental policies and natural resources with urban development and transportation. All of these areas are equal in long-term planning for the national territory. This integration is an instrument for sustainable development.

Sustainable development requires a change in attitudes, a change in the relationship between man and the environment, a change which implies a return to simpler values. In that respect, many concepts that until now were symbols of modernization and progress need to be re-thought. They may be inappropriate for sustainable development.

FARES BOUEZ, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lebanon: The war in Lebanon has caused damage at all levels. The moral crisis caused by the war has been a serious impediment to progress, and the infrastructure remains seriously damaged. Also, due to the weak Government during the conflict, unbridled urbanization had taken place, with a severe effect on the coastal areas. Hence, environment is implicitly linked to Lebanon's reconstruction policy. On a material level, the forests -- the thousand-year-old cedars -- will have to be re-seeded, and the coastlines have been seriously degraded. The aspects of reconstruction directed at the Lebanese people will be the most difficult to implement because, in order to foster balanced development, they call for understanding and safeguarding of the environment.

Protection of the environment requires a policy that is open, so that the people themselves can determine priorities. Gradually, social and economic inequalities can then be reduced. Based on that policy, a broader international effort can then be added. Capable institutions must be created; the nature, options and goals of environment policy should be published and submitted to all citizens; research and investigation must be carried out on environmental issues. While the solution depends first and foremost on national will, the international community must also be involved.

MOHAMAD JALIL SHAMS, Deputy Foreign Minister and Economic Adviser to the Head of State of Afghanistan: There is not a single aspect of the country's environment which has not been affected by war in the past 14 years. War has resulted in great human and natural losses for Afghanistan, polluting the environment, eliminating the forests and accelerating desertification.

Among the environment issues with which Afghanistan must deal are afforestation and reforestation; energy substitutes and a system of energy conservation; improved and sound management of agrochemicals; de-mining; and restoring educational facilities. The country faces a huge task of rehabilitation, and appeals to the international community for help in its reconstruction and rebuilding efforts.

Developing countries are eager to raise their standards of living rapidly and they think it can be achieved by industrialization. It is in the interest of everyone to help them avoid the sins of the past. At the same time,

industrialized countries have a moral obligation not to try to dump on developing countries whatever they are not allowed to sell in their own markets, and to put developing countries in a financial position to be able to avoid making compromises on the environment for the sake of the price.

MARTIN HOLDGATE, Director-General, International Union for the Conservation of Nature: Although the Union represents governmental and non-governmental organizations from developed and developing countries, the bulk of its work is in the South. The Conference has only partially addressed issues of over-consumption, poverty, resource depletion and economic inequities that block the exit from the poverty trap for millions of people. Agenda 21, largely a sectoral document, will only succeed if the issues are addressed in an intersectoral way. It is evident that the process of international debate will take place only at tables of a limited size.

The organization welcomes the Convention on Biodiversity and offers its unique expertise and knowledge to the parties to and the secretariat of the new Convention. The advantage of having the participation of outside organizations that are closely linked to the governmental machinery was that they could make valuable and cost-effective contributions.

WANGARI MATHAI, of the Greenbelt Movement, speaking on behalf of environment and development non-governmental organizations: Non-governmental organizations are fighting for an ecologically sound and socially just future for the planet, and they have followed the UNCED process from the start. The UNCED has brought about an awareness of key environmental issues, and its success or failure will be determined by the way in which environmentally sound and socially equitable societies are created.

Without progress on the issues, the policies agreed to at UNCED will be undermined. At the same time, changing inequitable social structures in individual countries is equally important. Non-governmental organizations have put forward concrete proposals for action in a 10-point plan to save the Earth Summit, which they presented to Governments. Clearly, the Summit has not fulfilled its vision and mandate. The suggestions of non-governmental organizations have been brushed aside, and some of the actions taken have been irresponsible.

New patterns of international cooperation are required to address global concerns, but the negotiations have been compromised by a paralysis of logic and the narrow interests of traditional politics. But the level of environment and development debate has changed forever, thanks to UNCED. Many issues have been placed on the negotiating table as never before. However, what has been gained through UNCED risks being lost through the failure of Governments to act decisively. It is unfortunate that the United States, which bears responsibility for so much of the environmental degradation, has failed to fulfil its role in the international community.

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FRANCESCA POMETTA, member of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC): The Rio Conference has reminded us that war is intrinsically destructive to the environment. This is a tragic reality. Systematic destruction of the environment has become a deadly weapon, causing misery to thousands of people. The ICRC has the responsibility of protecting those people.

How to meet this challenge? Thought has been given to juridical aspects, to pit the tragic, brutal reality against the norms of international law. Conventional international law limits certain methods of warfare. In fact, Protocol I of the Geneva Convention contains precise rules for protecting the environment during time of war. So, there were provisions, but they were too often ignored and flouted.

There are ways of approaching this problem. An international fact-finding commission is one. The principle of individual criminal responsibility under the Geneva Convention is another. The ICRC is convinced that respect for existing law will make it possible to limit environmental destruction, but the existing laws must be clarified.

The ICRC will continue to draw attention to problems in the application of humanitarian law, among them the problem of simultaneous applicability of international environmental and humanitarian law and the need to define the content of rules in non-international conflict. But, the juridical aspects should not disguise the ultimate purpose, the protection of the human person in times of conflict. Respect for the environment is inseparable from the protection of victims of armed conflict.

Participation of Children

Four children addressed the plenary at the conclusion of the general debate. Yuri Agrawal, from Canada, said that "action begins with the individual" and told the assembled delegates: "Youth can really help if you only give us half a chance."

Betina Schwind, from Germany, described a water pollution project she worked on with people from four different countries, and reminded the plenary that "if you don't make the right decisions at this Conference, we are all in danger."

Marcella Pacheco, from Chile, said her greatest concern was the "lack of communication and lack of love" in her home country. She added that "in order to decontaminate the world, we have to begin by being human beings".

Severn Suzuli, a member of ECO, a four-member children's environmental organization, said she had come from Vancouver, 5,000 miles away, "to tell you adults that you must change your ways". She described meeting some street children two days ago. One of them had told her that if they were rich, they would give all street children food, medicine, love and affection, which prompted her to think: "if a child on the street is willing to share, why do we continue to be so greedy?"

(more)

Thanks Expressed

CELSO LAFER, Minister for External Relations of Brazil and ex-officio Vice-President, thanked the children for reminding those present that they were responsible to future generations, not only for words but for deeds. Recalling that article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child guarantees the right of every child to express his or her views on matters affecting children, he said that by their voices they had shown that not only children but all mankind were affected. He was happy that the general debate had concluded with the words of children.

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